

SUMMER DIARY

Gerald Haigh mixes Methodist churches with Asian dance and an American museum

Moving to cultural rhythms



East meets West in Birmingham: Nahid Siddiqui leads a Kathak dance class

I suspect that, deep down, one of my reasons for not having been much to the city of Bath lies in the problem of its pronunciation. If you possess, as I do, the northern tongue, then the common noun "bath" has a short "a". Usually this causes no problem. To go about speaking of "Bath" in the same way, though, sounds strangely uncouth. It is, I suppose, like pronouncing Lyons, in France, as if it were a tea-house. The solution to the Northern Bath Dilemma is probably to treat it as a foreign place name with its own pronunciation independent of the common noun. Which is all very well except, first, I have actual physical difficulty in saying "Bath", and, second, if I told my Dad I had been on holiday to Bath, he would give me an even more old-fashioned look than usual.

However, that place on the Fosse Way turned out to be satisfying in every way, except for a terminal case of traffic strangulation. There was so much of interest, too, in nearby places. Perhaps the most satisfying cathedral visit I have ever made was to Wells mainly, I suspect, because its spiritual presence easily survives the shuffle of tourists. Despite the season, I found myself sitting for a few minutes in the great circular Chapter House absolutely alone.

In complete and moving contrast to Wells was a little church I discovered buried in the middle of a brutal shopping precinct in Bristol. The New Room is the oldest Methodist church in the world, built by John Wesley in 1739 as a meeting place for his growing band of followers. It is a quiet, cool place of wooden benches and plain walls, full of simple dignity and sense of passing years. Upstairs are the rooms which Wesley and his family used, and the window from which he could watch neophyte preachers at work in the chapel below. It is a deeply educative place, simply to sit in it and look around is to understand something of the statement which Methodism was making about religion and the Established Church.

The New Room is in the Horsefair, Bristol, and it is open to visitors every day except Wednesday and Sunday. School parties are welcome and I

recommend it as a quiet, thoughtful and educational alternative to some of the more well-known attractions.

On the edge of Bath, the teacher in me soon nosed out Claverton Manor, the American Museum in Britain. Founded by Americans anxious to promote knowledge of their history, Claverton Manor, in a beautiful landscaped setting, contains many rooms panelled, furnished and equipped with original materials from pre-Civil War America, as well as displays on the opening of the West, the American Indian, and a reproduction of an 18th-century Massachusetts tavern.

I talked with Dr John Hutton, director of education, a man with a deep understanding of how museums should be used for learning. You are not likely to see at Claverton, as at some other museums, school parties hurtling past the exhibits intent only on reaching the gift shop.

"We prefer teachers to get in touch with us, and we organize something to suit," commented Dr Hutton. A tour of the whole museum, for instance, is recommended only for staff parties.

While it is suggested that younger children concentrate on a topic or

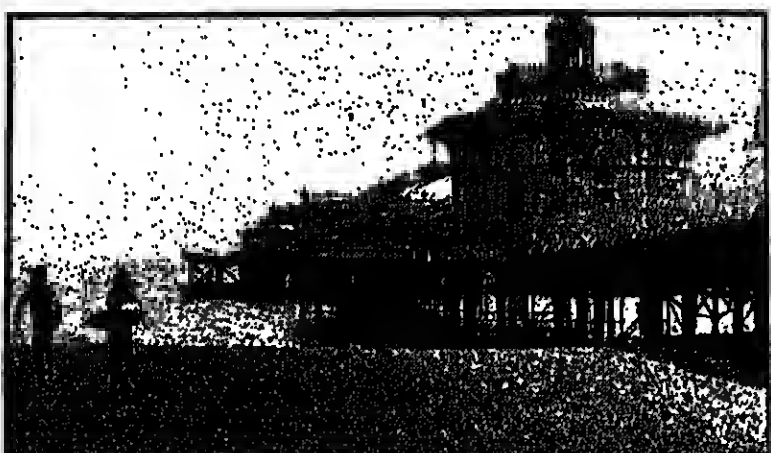
period. Advice is given about the preparation of worksheets, and guides accompany the children. Films and other audio-visual material are available, and there are clothes and artefacts to touch and wear. School visits are kept separate from the public opening times. Write to: The Education Centre, the American Museum in Britain, Claverton, Bath.

Back home, my attention was caught by the news that there was to be a short holiday course for children in Kathak dance. Ever conscious of my ignorance of Asian arts, I visited a sports hall at Sidney Stringer school in

this too, and I watched Nahid Siddiqui, a leading Kathak dancer, demonstrating some of the deceptively simple-looking and hypnotically graceful hand movements.

To talk to a committed dancer like Nahid - she returns to India or Pakistan each year to "top up" her skills and mental disciplines - is to realize that Kathak, like other classical Indian forms, is at least as demanding as Western ballet. "It is not a hobby," says Nahid, with resignation borne of the less than total dedication she finds among some Western students.

Sadler's Wells have on energetic



Brighton's West Pier: an example of rusting Victorian elegance

Coventry, and discovered Indu Aggarwal teaching some basic steps to an eager gaggle of Coventry kids. Mrs Aggarwal aims to spread knowledge of this highly disciplined Indian classical art and to try to get Coventry to fund a teaching programme.

Over in Birmingham, I found an example of what can be done. Birmingham Hippodrome is the second home of Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, and this summer the ballet has run a one week multicultural dance scheme for children of 9 to 13. Kathak figured

educational programme organized in Birmingham. One of the projects this year will involve half a dozen primary schools each adopting a dancer, and running a cross-curricular project in which the school looks at the places the dancer visits as well as studying aspects of performance.

As with all ethnic arts, there is speculation about how an art form will develop in a different culture. At the moment Western educational institutions seem to be dealing with ethnic arts largely by running "dabbling"

courses on one day workshops. "The problem is getting it taken seriously," said Agnes Meadows, acting director of the Academy of Indian Dance, in London. The Academy, funded by the ILEA and other London authorities, runs courses and provides information about classical Indian dance.

Perhaps in time we will see other classical traditions standing side by side with Western ballet within our culture and educational system. Meanwhile, what Nahid Siddiqui does is intensely beautiful. Teachers who want to know more, or who want to see Indian dance ought to write to the Academy at 16 Flaxman Terrace, London W1H 9AT.

And so, briefly, to Brighton, the pronunciation of which gives me no trouble. The saddest thing about Brighton is the way that its Regency character has been destroyed. Still, there are nice things, such as the project to restore the rusting West Pier, which is a magnificent example of Victorian engineering, topped by the decaying shells of two beautifully eccentric pavilions.

The Preservation Group, looking askance at the unashamed wall-to-wall candy floss and slot machine policy of the Palace Pier, have a vision of the West Pier covered with craft shops and studios. Praiseworthy enough, but I am not convinced that becoming a sort of Covent Garden on stilts is a proper apotheosis for such a structure. In fact I think I prefer it in its present state of epic desolation.

NEXT WEEK

Opting out

What happens when Whitehall holds the purse strings

Contract time

James Meikle reports on the union planned work-to-contract next term

California summer

Richard Adams finds year-round students with more than beer and pizza on their minds

East Enders

A day in a Ragged School

THE TIMES Educational Supplement

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Hungerford school picks up the pieces

by Sarah Bayliss

The headmaster of John O'Gaunt comprehensive in Hungerford, where mass-killer Michael Ryan committed suicide last week, has no memory of the man who was a pupil at the school in the 1970s.

Mr David Lee, aged 51, who joined the school in April 1975, two years before 27-year-old Ryan left, said other staff also had difficulty recalling the "quiet" boy who last week shot 29 people, killing 16.

"It is a matter of pride to know all your pupils but I'm ashamed to admit I can't remember him," Mr Lee said. Lisa Milderhall, a 14-year-old pupil was still recovering in hospital this week after being shot in the legs by Ryan. Lisa and two ex-pupils, Alison Chapman 16, and Myra Geater, 17, have all received visits from their headmaster.

Mr Lee drove the eight miles from his home to school after he learned the gunman had barricaded himself into a third-floor classroom. He helped the police intercept maps of the building and was taken inside within minutes of police finding Ryan shot dead.

"I've been in another world for days," Mr Lee said. "But I suppose heads rise to these occasions because minor crises on a day by day basis give you a sound training."

At a meeting of parents, teachers, governors, kitchen and caretaking staff this week it was agreed that school life should "return to normal" as soon as possible after term begins on September 7.

Room Six, where Ryan died, is already being redecorated and will continue to be used as a form room for a third-year class and for English lessons. Blood-stained furniture is being replaced by Berkshire County Council.

Mr Robin Tubb, a lecturer in building and construction at Newbury College, taught Ryan 11 years ago. He remembered him as a "quiet, inoffensive and shy" student.

Ryan's tutor - page 5

Science A level entries plunge

by Ian Nash and Sue Surkes

The number of pupils entering for A level physics, chemistry and biology has fallen dramatically over the past two years.

Figures from five of the eight A level examining boards show the total number of entries in the three sciences has dropped from 96,288 in 1985 to 86,856 in 1986 - a decline of 9.8 per cent. Entries for these subjects had been declining up to 1984.

By contrast, the 18-year-old population has decreased by only 3.8 per cent over the period and A level entries by 2 per cent.

The figures for Oxford, Southern and Associated Examining boards are unavailable when the TES went to press. But the drop in entries from the others suggests a continuing shortage of science graduates.

And it could have serious implications for industry and higher education, Universities have already been

asked by the Standing Conference on University Entrance to review their entry requirements, course structures and teaching methods.

"In general terms, we are clear in our own minds that the universities will have to adjust to the drop in the numbers of people coming forward with adequate A level qualifications in the sciences. How they do it is up to them," Dr Clive Wake, secretary of SCUE, said this week.

The recruitment of science and engineering undergraduates to universities from non-traditional backgrounds was discussed at the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) in Belfast this week.

Dr John Horlock, vice-chancellor of the Open University, predicted the introduction of less specialist entry requirements which would profoundly affect higher education teaching styles.

Professor Cedric Hassall, head of chemistry at Warwick University and president of the chemistry section of the BAAS, said recent attempts to boost science in schools had "sadly failed".

Sir David Bates, emeritus professor of theoretical physics at The Queen's University, Belfast, and president of the BAAS physics section, blamed the decline on a lack of adequate investment in science teaching.

He warned that numbers would slump to half the present level by the mid-1990s unless an immediate move was made to redress the problem.

"If pupils are taught by someone who does not properly understand their subject, then they cannot be expected to gain an appreciation of the subject," he said.

The most prestigious universities do not appear to have suffered any significant drops in either the quantity or

quality of applicants for science degree places this autumn. But as some universities are lowering their entry requirements to fill places, the shortfall is being shaken down through the system. The less popular universities and polytechnics are likely to suffer the most.

Applications vary throughout the UK. But even the big-name science universities such as Aston, Salford and Birmingham report that demand for physics and maths places has declined steadily over the last few years.

Leeds University, which faces a shortage of biochemistry applicants this year, has been forced to go into the clearing system for the first time in several years. "Everyone, even those with science A levels, seems to want to read law or business studies these days," said Anne McClurkin, assistant registrar of admissions.

Additional research by Elaine Hines.

'Assess schools by behaviour,' says DES

about pupils' social behaviour details about lack of truancy, lateness and "de-should be collected to help their performance and according to professional DES discussion to be published later this

men), writes Sue Surkes. It says judging a school's performance by exam achievement alone is a "major deficiency". So-called performance indicators - categories of information used for assessing a school - should be broadened to embrace social behaviour and post-school experience. Among other things, it highlights the significance of lateness, saying: "Persistent lateness is a sign of anti-social behaviour and should be discouraged and overcome through self-discipline."

suggests a school's information might be topped up by checking police records, although it does not say who would have access to such records. The paper, understood to have been written by a senior civil servant in the Department of Education and Science's statistics branch, lists factors "relevant to the DES" as relevant to the devising performance indicators for schools. These include pupils' socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and "latent ability" and staff "disposition". The next stage, it says, is to

agree indicators which can be used by individual schools. Departmental interest in performance indicators pre-dates the arrival of Mr Kenneth Baker as Education Secretary, going back to Sir Keith Joseph's tenure at the DES. Work on a succession of papers has been going on for some time.

A source at the department said the document had been sanctioned by the "current political leaders within the DES". The source added: "It will go out as an exercise in provoking discussion

about how you measure performance of a school, taking account of socioeconomic factors." It is understood the document was written at the instigation of the Treasury, which is undertaking a "value for money" exercise in the public sector. The main message of the document is that objectives should be set across a range of areas so that individual schools, "whether staff, governors or parents", can better assess existing practice. "The purpose of the depart-

Continued on page 5

NOTICEBOARD

No 319 CROSSWORD by Rufus

PEOPLE

Mr Tony Evans to be president of the National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers in succession to Mr Alan Vincent. Mr Elsie Bell, student services officer at the College for the Distant Trades, to be head of student counselling at Hatfield Polytechnic from September. She is also to chair the Association for Student Counselling.

CONFERENCES...

September 11-13 Politics, management and education: where next? annual conference of the British Educational Management and Administration Society at La Sante Union College, Southampton. Speakers include Professor Richard King, The Revd W Thomas, Dr P Dugan, Mr Tim Brighouse, Mrs Frances Morrell and Mr Philip Merrifield.

October 8 Professional updating for women returners organized by the Women's Returners Network at Newhall Hall, London EC1. Speakers include Anne Mueller, Rofelia Dunsmore and Lynda Carr. Details from Ruth Michaels, Hatfield Polytechnic, PO Box 109, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 0AB.

October 9 Basic tests - present and future prospects organized by the Industrial Society and the Associated Examining Board for employers, careers advisers, staff, teachers and YTS managers at the Three Tuns Hotel, Durham. Fee £28.75. Details from John Francis AEB, Stag Hill House, Guildford GU2 5YQ.

October 10 Different but equal: opportunities in music education organized by the Association for the Advancement of Teacher Education in Music at Bristol Polytechnic with Dr Leslie Burt and John Bean on the role of music education particularly in areas of special needs, music therapy, gender and multi-ethnic education. Fee £15.50. Details from Ms Dreen Struthers, 331A Whitham Road, London N8 6NA.

COURSES...

September 25 Using computer algebra to teach mathematics organized by Jane Bryan-Jones of the Cambridge College of Arts and Technology science department at the Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge, for those planning to introduce a computer algebra system into a teaching programme in higher or further education. Fee £55. Details from Margaret Hew, Administrative Assistant, Department of Science, CCAT, Telephone 0223 382592.

October 5-11 Courseswork in GCSE geography and geology for teachers at the Drapers' Field Centre, Snowdonia, organized by the Field Studies Council with Eai Wilson, Keith Orrell and Peter Hendry. Fee £52. Details from the Information Office, Field Studies Council, Preston, Monmouth Bridge, Shrewsbury SY4 1HW.

October 16-18 GCSE biology coursework: teachers' course at Preston Monifield Field Centre, Shrewsbury organized by the Field Studies Council with Ray Walker and Pat

Wilson. Fee £52. Details from the Information Office, Field Studies Council.

October 20-25 Kent Literature Festival at the Arts Centre, Folkestone, includes The Poetry Show on October 21 with the Schools' Poetry Association for English teachers and anyone involved in literature in education; primary school events on October 21, 22, secondary school events on October 23. Full programme details from the Metropole, The Leas, Folkestone, Kent.

October 25-26 Microbiology in schools advisory committee poster competition for individual pupils or class groups to design a poster demonstrating how microbes work to maintain the quality of the environment. Posters should be A3 in size and the maximum number of entries per school is 10. Closing date April 1. Further details from Dr D Hardman, Institute for Biotechnological Studies, Research and Development Centre, University of Kent at Canterbury, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7PD, to whom entries should be sent.

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George Lyward research project undertaken by the work of George Lyward and the application of his ideas to contemporary education. Anyone who knew George Lyward and the work with emotionally-disturbed high IQ boys at Fincham Manor from 1935, or who has tried to apply his ideas to their teaching, is invited to write to Jeremy Harvey at

Bishop Fox's school, Kingston Road, Taunton.

PUBLICATIONS

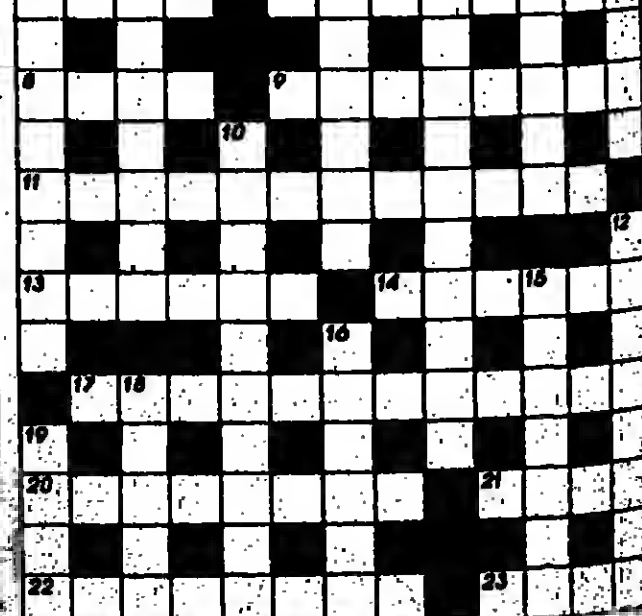
Getting started The latest education paper from the Fawcett Society reports on the awards for positive action for equal opportunities scheme and conference. It describes initiatives in schools, colleges and on training courses. £1 post free from the Fawcett Society, 46 Harleyford Road, London SE11 5AY.

Residential short courses A directory of study and leisure courses for winter 1987/88 is available from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 19b De Montford Street, Leicester LE1 7GE. Price £1.05 including postage.

Options for change A staff training handbook on personal relationships and sexuality for people with a mental handicap by Hilary Dixon, Price £6.50 including postage from the FPA Education Unit, 27-35 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7RJ.

Education Management Two new titles in the Sheffield Papers in Education Management series: The Implications of the Management Theory for the Development of Staff Appraisal in Schools by Peter Bamford and The Tertiary Solution Policy and Management Issues with Implications for one Yorkshire Town by Peter Waber. Details from the Departmental Secretary, Department of Education Management, Sheffield City Polytechnic, 36 Colopata Crescent, Sheffield S10 2BP.

No 319 CROSSWORD by Rufus



Across

- 1 He takes after his father, presumably (4)
- 2 See great changes in economy travel (8)
- 3 Pres work in the United East (4)
- 4 Nymph with broken heart took to America (8)
- 5 The strain of the French Revolution (12)
- 6 A shapeless mass something with which to play and work (6)
- 7 A dog's a bratily baying baying baying (10)
- 8 Insuring cases (5)
- 9 The old house (6)
- 10 The old house (6)
- 11 The old house (6)
- 12 He makes a bit from dirty money (8)
- 13 Completed when swollen after night (7)
- 14 Radio problem which never goes away (6)
- 15 New quality (4)
- 16 The picture plane features (4)

Down

- 1 How a complaint but not bought (4-4)
- 2 I'm over the danger though put in jeopardy (7)
- 3 Sea creature puts number in letter confusion (6)
- 4 Additional protection by the field (12, 5)
- 5 A torn stub joint at the sides (5)
- 6 Crossed-out cash (4)
- 7 The old house (6)
- 8 The old house (6)
- 9 The old house (6)
- 10 The old house (6)
- 11 The old house (6)
- 12 He makes a bit from dirty money (8)
- 13 Completed when swollen after night (7)
- 14 Radio problem which never goes away (6)
- 15 New quality (4)
- 16 The picture plane features (4)



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If it moves, measure it

It would be tempting to write off the DES discussion paper on performance indicators for secondary schools which is currently making the rounds of Whitehall (page 1) with incredulity, or to read it as a useful attempt by the statistics department to demonstrate the ludicrous result of attempting rigidly to quantify the diverse factors which relate to the quality of a school's performance.

The recent history of educational policy-making should be sufficient warning against any such complacency, especially when the exercise is so potentially in line with thinking in the Treasury, the Cabinet and the radical Right.

In any event, the discussion document needs to be taken seriously, not least because there will be wide agreement on many of the themes and aspirations running through it. In the main, it is the way in which pseudo-scientific models are glibly put forward for practical consideration as methods of assessing performance that gives rise to fearful doubts.

The starting point is that search for the educational holy grail which has long preoccupied ministers, inspectors and researchers: what makes a good school? (With the inevitable corollary, how do you measure its worth?)

Sir Keith Joseph, as Secretary of State, was keen to commission research on the subject, though there seems to have been reluctance at the DES to fund any of the projects subsequently proposed.

The debate has continued, however, especially on the examination league-table front, and in the light of it the paper's authors accept that examination success is not the only worthwhile indicator of a school's performance, and that in any case socio-economic factors prevent all secondary schools from starting from the same place. Thus far, political theorists and researchers now seem to have reached an uneasy truce.

But disagreement that a school's performance is inevitably qualified by the home background and innate abilities of its pupils, and that a good school should turn out civilized human beings as well as exam successes, only brings you through the first hurdle. The really difficult bit is how to translate social and behavioural inputs and outcomes into data from which performance indicators can be constructed, for use by the staff, governors or parents of individual schools.

So far, so (fairly) good, provided that the formidable technical difficulties can be solved. It is in line with improved accountability and the new statutory responsibilities of governors, and ought to provide useful tools for parents exercising choice. It is in line with the paper that work on these lines has already been started in some local authorities as well as by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Ironically, it is in the research and statistics

department of the Inner London Education Authority, the authority which the Government is intent on destroying, that much of that pioneering groundwork has been done, for example in Dr Peter Mortimore's Junior School Project and in the publication of exam league tables which sorted schools into five groups by comparing performance with expectations calculated in the light of intake ability and social background.

In one of the most tortuously written paragraphs of the DES number-cruncher's paper, doubts are raised about how best to categorize the socio-economic context without giving offence to the very parents you are supposed to be informing (a problem also addressed with some difficulty by the ILEA). There is then a considerable intellectual leap to the proposition that schools might be placed in 10 bands of expectation by "a method of self-classification".

But it is the search for performance indicators of social behaviour that lead the statisticians into the real minefields, even granted that absenteeism, extra-curricular pursuits and post-school life-styles are legitimate matters for parental concern.

It may be possible to set objectives, and thence indicators, for truancy and lateness figures, though even the collection of those looks more complicated at the school end than it does in Whitehall, but the paper gets into unbelievably deep water on disciplinary objectives. It is suggested, for example, that police records might be used to arrive at externally moderated objectives "to keep the proportion of pupils found guilty of indictable offences below the average level for the age group within the locality".

A desirable disciplinary objective indeed, given that the law on access to police records would have to be turned on its head, and only slightly more breathtaking than the next proposal.

This is that pupil demeanour should be assessed not just by the teaching staff, but by members of the public approached with a survey questionnaire, by senior pupils (no doubt from the sociology classes which will soon fall victim to the national curriculum). In an Annex, the paper also proposes that staff demeanour should be assessed as a "process indicator". On a scale of one to ten? There must be similar doubts about another suggested "input factor": levels of pupil and parent expectation.

In their search for ways of measuring a school's performance outside the explicit curriculum, the authors seem to have picked up echoes of Rutter and Hargreaves, but then got into hopeless difficulties by attempting to do it on the basis of pupil behaviour, and without beginning to demonstrate - even in a half-baked way - how parental and public expectations might be shown to affect the outcome. At the least they fall their

own test, that indicators must not only be related to stated objectives but acceptable and credible. It is not yet clear whether this "informal" discussion paper is to be published in its present form, though some who have seen it fear that if its present unfortunate prose style is rendered into more unctuous manderliness, some of its more sinister intent could be concealed.

Still concealed at this stage of the discussion is the precise purpose of performance indicators to codify pupils' social behaviour as well as their academic performance. Is it just to satisfy a legitimate interest of parents, governors and local business in the value added by each school, or does a passing reference to value for money mean that a school's funding could be cut if pupil demeanour or a mention in police files did something nasty to the indicators?

So far, all that has been demonstrated is that you can't assess a school's all-round performance in Treasury value-for-money terms, without bringing in the thought police.

Flight from science

The signs of a fall in the numbers taking A levels in science (page 3) are particularly unwelcome at a time when we are looking for a sustained improvement in Britain's technological competence.

Up until 1984, with sixth-form numbers growing, there was a steady increase in the numbers of A level passes in most subjects, but particularly in science and technology. Between 1975 and 1984 A level passes in all subjects went up by a quarter but the rise in science subjects was almost twice that (48 per cent).

By 1985, however, that growth had apparently gone into reverse. Science A level passes were down nearly 4 per cent, though passes in all subjects fell by only 2.4 per cent.

Comparable official figures for the years 1986 and 1987 have yet to be published, but provisional figures on A level entries released to *The TES* by five of the eight GCE boards indicate that the downward trend forecasted in 1985 has continued and even worsened.

The size of the 18-year-old cohort has fallen by about 4 per cent since 1985, but the percentage staying on into the sixth form has increased slightly. Accordingly, the boards' figures indicate a fall of about 2 per cent in total A level entries.

So the 10 per cent drop in entries for science A levels over those two years represents a dismal decline in the science sixth in relation to other subjects. That is sombre news indeed for the

Government, for higher education and for industry who are not just hoping for more well-qualified young scientists, but to some extent banking upon them.

The position of mathematics is different. Entries have fallen by less than 1 per cent since 1985, which means maths has largely retained its ground of the expense of other subjects, but it only serves to underline the flagging attraction of science and technology subjects.

The reasons behind this new flight from science are not immediately obvious. Certainly there would seem to be no lack of incentive if we were to take seriously what industrialists say about the need for highly-trained technologists and what universities say about empty places on technology courses.

But do such considerations motivate the 18-year-old's subject choice? A far more immediate influence is likely to be the enthusiasm for the subject engendered by the teacher. It is entirely coincidental, then, that this decline in enthusiasm for science corresponds with the flight from the classroom of hundreds of disgruntled teachers, flight led by the eminently employable school graduates?

The DES consultative paper on shortage subjects last year, *Action on Teacher Supply*, recognized that the rarest breed of them all, the physics teacher, became even more of an endangered species during this period; that over half those teaching the subject have no formal qualification in physics; and that one in five of their teaching physics have no higher qualification in it at all.

Without some real action to make the teaching and learning of science more attractive there seems little likelihood of achieving the status required to sustain science teaching at the level of inadequate level, let alone that envisaged in the Government's national curriculum.

The position will be even worse in the years ahead when secondary pupil numbers start to rise again. The impression formed by those pupils who go to schools of the nature both of science and of teaching will be crucial if the increased demand for science teachers in the 1990s and beyond are to be met. So far, there is little evidence that the increasing pressure to make science compulsory to 16 is resulting in more pupils studying the subject in the sixth form.

The Highways committee, asked by the Government to look into how A levels might be "maintained and improved", needs to consider very carefully this dire trend in the supply of science A levels alongside the increasing demand for them, to determine whether we can cope with sixth form science courses which are regarded as more demanding than many of the arts counterparts; and to point the way towards much less specialized approach to such study.

Unions demand extra cash for GCSE assessment

by James Melke

Teachers are threatening to embroil GCSE candidates in their contractual row with the Government.

Secondary school pupils may be sent home so their teachers can devote more time to assessments for the exam. The first certificates will be awarded next summer.

The threat follows Mr Kenneth Baker's decision that teachers should not receive payments for such work, since the contract which accompanied their "substantial" pay rise requires them to prepare children for public examinations.

Local authorities, who would have to meet the cost of increased charges from the exam boards if payments were made, are therefore unlikely to meet union demands at a meeting next month.

The most immediate threat comes from the two TUC-affiliated unions, the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, who have already distributed time sheets to members to record the 1,265 hours a year they are required to be available for direction by the head.

This is said to be only a protection against "unreasonable" demands, but up to now there was a prospect GCSE assessment would be excluded. Teachers argue that GCSE work is work done for private organizations, the exam boards, and ought to be paid for as such. GCSE and CSE assessments have been paid for at token rates - but Mr Baker argues that only marking of final exam papers and moderation should be paid for as additional work.

Other unions also accuse the Government of simply adding to the problems in secondary schools, despite ministerial assurances that improved pupil-teacher ratios are leaving more time for assessment.

Baker sets single study targets

by Sue Surkes

Mr Kenneth Baker has asked his national curriculum working parties on maths and science to recommend a series of single attainment targets, measurable at different levels.

In letters of guidance to the parties, which have been set up to advise on targets and programmes of study, the Education Secretary says he is looking for attainment targets which set out the "knowledge, skills and understanding" which pupils of different abilities should be able to achieve at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16.

He adds: "So far as possible, I want to avoid having different attainment targets for children of different levels of ability. I shall expect you to justify any essential exceptions from this principle. In general, I seek targets for the key ages which may be attempted and assessed at a range of levels, and which challenge good children to the best that he or she can."

Mr Baker, who is understood to want a simple system that does not involve a complex web of targets, would like to see a system along the lines of the German system, which uses a six-point scale, although he is willing to recommend exceptions from his 11-point Group on Assessment and Testing.

Much work in the area has already been done by the GCSE grade criteria working parties. One example drawn from the maths draft grade criteria specifies "use of resources" as a target and splits down into various levels.

Level 1 involves being able to use a range of resources including a four-function calculator. Level 4 requires finding the value of the multiplier in a simple program on a microcomputer.

A DES source stressed that it would be teaching techniques rather than the targets themselves which would ensure that children of all abilities were challenged. "The challenge of learning about the French Revolution, for example, is not something that will bore the more able or deter the less able. It's a matter of the teaching. And teachers should be challenging the brightest and helping the less able along."

The letters of guidance, published this week, further point out that there will be no separate assessment and testing in maths and science at 16 because the Government expects all pupils to take GCSE exams or equivalents such as BTEC and City and Guilds qualifications in these subjects.

The working groups will be expected to recommend attainment targets and study programmes for 16-year-olds which can be used to help judge whether the GCSE criteria need to be altered to bring them into line with national curriculum provisions lower down the school.

The letters stress that the Government wants "space to accommodate the diverse needs of teachers, offering them a range of choices in the content of content to adapt what they teach to the needs of the individual pupil."

And it points out that Technical and Vocational Education Initiative will build on the framework offered by the national curriculum. Flexibility of teaching approaches "should enable schools to accommodate any special emphasis within their TVEI plans while still meeting the requirements of the national curriculum."

NEWS

Plans laid to close grammars

by Geraldine Hackett

The one-time Conservative stronghold of Trafford will lose its grammar schools, single-sex and Church of England voluntary aided schools in one fell swoop if a new reorganization scheme is approved by the Education Secretary.

Labour and Liberal councillors who now hold the balance of power on the hung Manchester authority plan to replace the schools with comprehensive ones. But the proposals will undoubtedly be opposed by parents - particularly Muslims - who want their children to attend single-sex schools.

The council is seeking approval for a scheme that involves switching from mainly single-sex grammar schools and secondary schools to 10 co-educational comprehensives. Sixth-formers would transfer to one of three types of colleges - tertiary, FE or sixth-form.

Elsewhere, in Warwickshire and Sutton, the education authorities have withdrawn plans for scrapping grammar schools because they fear the Education Secretary will not give his approval. Other councils are postponing reorganization in case they encounter opposition from schools threatening to opt out of council control.

● Alliance-controlled Gloucestershire County Council is pressing on with plans to abolish grammar schools. Last week Mr Kenneth Baker approved a re-organization scheme in the mid-Cotswolds which included closing a 399-year-old grammar school.



Paper work: Pupils from St Thomas's Church of England Primary School in Appleford Road, London, prepare for this Sunday's Notting Hill Children's Carnival.

Funding row delays paper on ILEA

by Susan Greenberg

The Government's consultative document on the Inner London Education Authority will not be published until the end of October. It had been expected early next month.

The delay is connected with disagreements between Mr Baker and Mr Nicholas Ridley, the Environment Minister, over the funding of the ILEA once the Conservative-controlled boroughs opt-out.

Mr Ridley is insisting that no borough be allowed to go it alone until after the introduction of the community charge and the uniform business rate.

A DES spokesman confirmed that no borough would be able to opt out before 1990. This is a blow to the boroughs of Wandsworth, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster, which had hoped to make the break with the ILEA earlier.

Parents want selection back

Nearly two-thirds of parents want Britain to return to a selective system of grammar and secondary modern schools, according to a nationwide MORI poll the results of which have been given to the Education Secretary.

The survey, commissioned by *Reader's Digest* and published this week, shows that 40 per cent are no more satisfied now with the education children receive in state secondary schools than they were a few years ago.

Nearly half of the parents interviewed - and 36 per cent of Labour voters - said they would send their children to private schools if they could afford it. One in five parents had either changed or considered changing their child's school.

MORI interviewed 304 parents of state secondary school children as part of a survey of 1,940 people throughout Britain in May.

At the same time, however, three out of four parents said they were at least fairly satisfied with their children's education.

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JOINING AFTER YOUR INTERESTS

Barry Cole writes from Edinburgh

Harmonious madness

To the uninitiate (and we cannot all go) the Edinburgh International Festival looks like a huge multi-media, multinational celebration (these words are being composed to a performance of Beethoven's "Overture in G" by the Melos Ensemble from the Queen's Hall - some 300 miles away).

Acres of print - or should it be verbiage or hectareage or li (Cardiff Laboratory Theatre is presenting *The Shanghai Kunju Theatre*) - give employment to hundreds of journalists who are busy scribbling around in the comparative peace of the silly season. The London press, particularly the weeklies, give fulsome and mostly good-natured coverage. And they have been impressed by the *glamour* (however such a term may be interpreted) and the romance of an apparently unfettered batch of Russians meandering among the cognoscents of the free world. Whether this openness is theirs and therefore good for us or ours and therefore good for them is another matter. More

important is the choice: more than 600 performances by actors and musicians from a dozen countries - and that is just the official Fringe at the Assembly Rooms. Who knows what goes on in the off-fringe or the fringe-Fringe? The Assembly Rooms, under the direction of the great and good William Burdett-Coutts, this year celebrates its bicentenary. And it is a striking thought that their assembly, as it were, took place while the industrial revolution burgeoned.

Edinburgh's industry today, however the rhetoric of "sunrise" will never again create an empire such as that which nourished Mr Burdett-Coutts's Victorian forebears. No doubt the painful employment of the huddled masses in heavy industry brought comparative prosperity. But it will not come again. No empire, once fallen, ever strikes back. Yet the festival itself suggests if not an answer, a prognosis. This is partly hinted at in the suggested full employment for the duration of so



many scribbles and hacks, coterminously so many *jongleurs* and *meuniers*, painters and denizens of the stage - and TV-lit world.

Could one not make of Edinburgh's "harmonious madness" a year-long (therefore eternal) event? Actors would cease resting, writers would be commissioned, dancers could republish (with new verbiage contribution to the industry) or, as a last resort, the uninitiate could attend a series

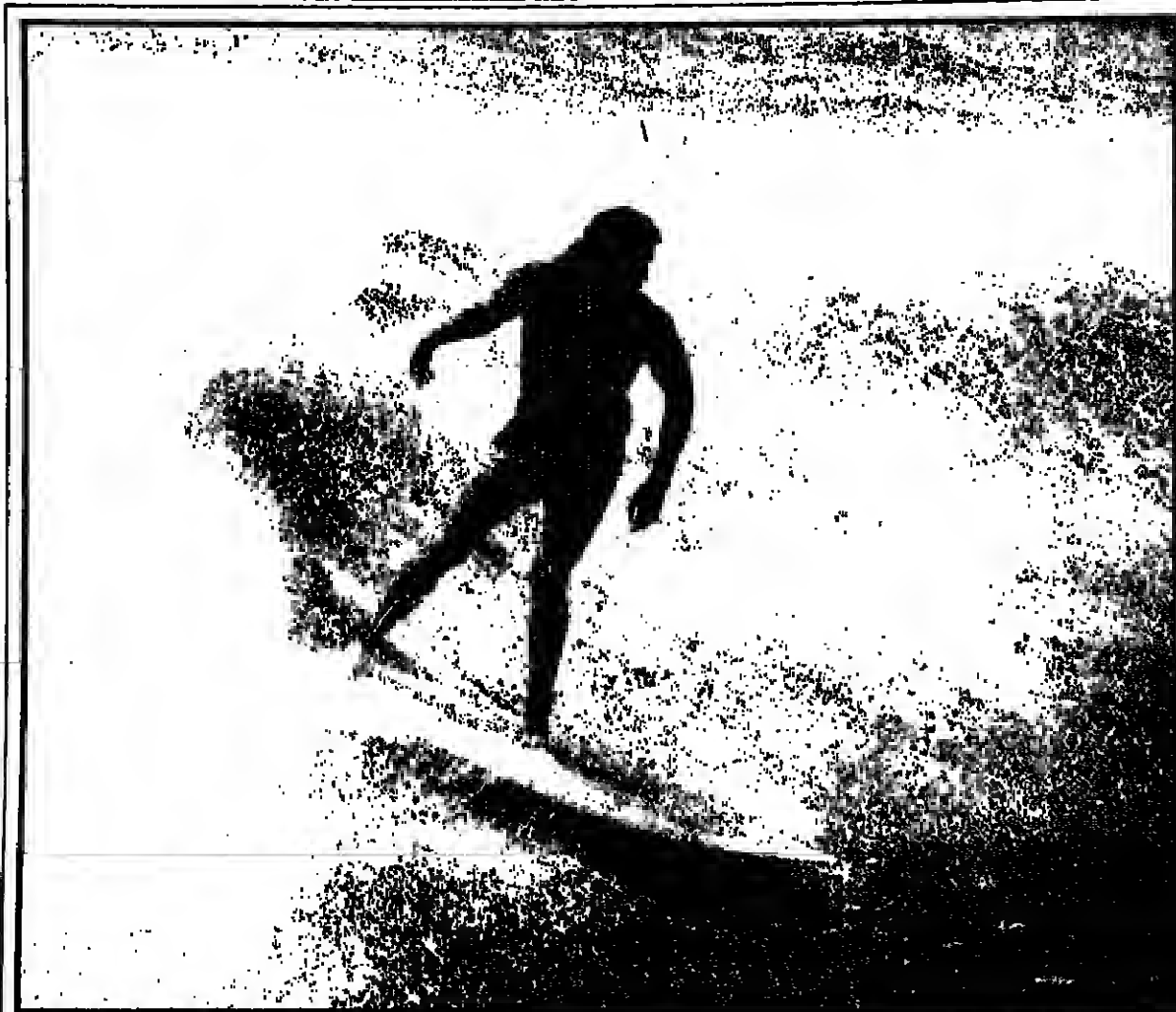
plotted, changing cheques to banknotes bearing strange devices. Nor need it end there: the academic theses industry would flourish (Forty Years On: A Festival Festschrift) and we could all, with J M Barrie, once again look upon the impressive sight of Scotsmen on the make. And Russians once again would be Europeans.

Edinburgh 1988 - page 18

... NO COMMENT

"Misbehaviour. Permitted. Misbehaviour (especially at the end of the school year) will result in the expulsion of the guilty party at the expense of the parent. Obviously this will only occur in very severe cases. From the brochure of a Cornish school."

PLATFORM



Balancing acts: two faces of Californian collegiates.



Pale swots among the surfers

By noon on a typical July day, the campus of California State University at Sacramento appears all but deserted. It is high vacation; the temperature is nudging 100 degrees and even expatriate Englishmen think twice before venturing into the midday sun. But the desertion is more apparent than real behind the tinted windows and the lowered blinds, there is plenty of activity — not only the sort of money-spinning vacation activity (the occasional conference, the seasonal exhibition) familiar in institutions of higher education in Britain, but also regular classes provided for students anxious to accelerate their academic programme beyond what can be encompassed in the university's two main, 15-week semesters.

In fact, there are very few times in the year when classes of one sort or another are not in progress here. The latter part of the Christmas vacation is taken up with a "three-week session" which features intensive three-and-a-half hour classes, Monday to Thursday. Between the end of the spring semester and the beginning of the autumn, similar sessions flank a six-week summer school whose daily classes run for over an hour-and-a-half.

As might be expected, the range of courses on offer during these extra sessions is much narrower than that during the regular semesters, though departments try to ensure that "required" courses are made available. The English department, for instance, makes a point of scheduling core classes in all areas of the curriculum: composition, language, literature and teacher education. While it would be

Not all Californian students spend their summer vacation lolling by the pool, as Richard Adams discovers

very rare indeed to find individual students enrolling for all of the extra sessions available in the course of the year, the number who sign up for one or perhaps two each year is far from insignificant.

Student anxiety — or at least willingness — to attend classes while the rest of the world is lolling by the pool or seeking the cooler air of the mountains is partly explained by the fact that so many of them have full-time jobs that have to be pursued alongside their

Sensible working students spread their academic burden thinly over as many months as possible

studies. And here I am referring not only to youngsters "balancing their work through school" but also to the large numbers of older students who return to university while already holding down prestigious and well-paid jobs in order to improve their qualifications, to retrain in a new area of expertise or maybe just to keep their minds sharp.

It is clearly more sensible for such "working students" to spread their academic burden thinly over as many months of the year as possible than to concentrate all their classes into the spring and autumn semesters, with the undesirable likelihood of either an academic or a professional "crash". Even so, cases like Clark's are far from rare.

Clark is a liberal studies major, working towards a bachelor's degree and a "credential" to teach in a state elementary school (the equivalent of the British primary school). He has been at his studies for four years and has another one to go before he is fully qualified. He has taken an average of four classes each semester, with one or two more during the three or six week sessions each year. Last spring, when I happened to be teaching him, he had managed to arrange to take mostly morning classes, though there was one that could only be accommodated between 2 and 3pm.

The significance of this becomes clear when Clark's studies are placed in the context of the rest of his life. He is a 24-hour day. To make enough money to see himself through school he was — and, for that matter, still is — working the graveyard shift at a local Safeway store (many supermarkets in California are open around the clock).

This meant checking in at 11pm and then working until 7 the next morning. After a short break to eat and freshen himself up, he started his first class at the university (which is fortunately only a 20-minute drive from his home) at 9am. Because of the one rogue class already mentioned, he had to stay on campus until 3pm each day, snatching time for a meal, seeing his professors, visiting the library and doing some private study between his various classes.

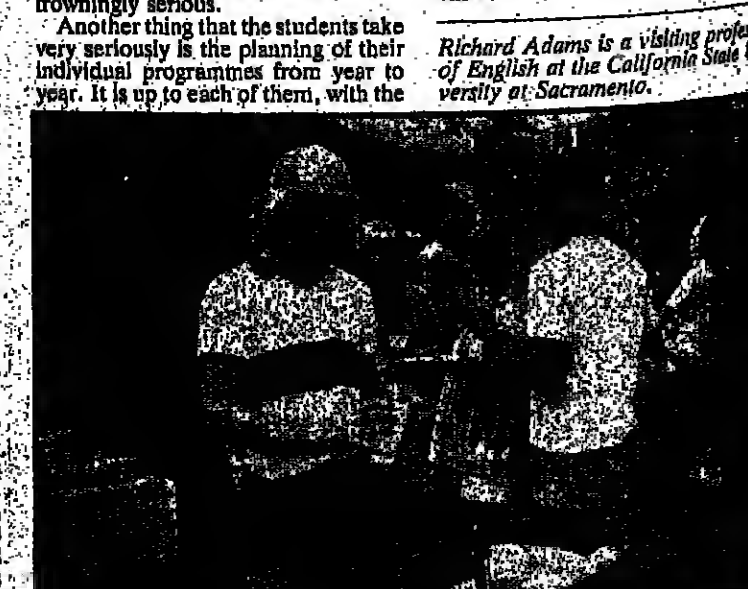
Only then could he go home, have a snooze and a shower, get in some further study and prepare himself for another stint in the supermarket. Clark's experience may sound hair-raising — and, indeed, it is — but it is by no means unusual for students at Californian universities (particularly those within the state system) to put themselves under this kind of pressure. Needless to say, Clark has not stopped his

aid of an academic adviser, to think carefully in advance about which classes to join each semester. They have to bear in mind that certain "prerequisite" classes have to be taken and mastered before they can move on to more advanced work, that it is unwise to take too many classes with a heavy essay-writing component at one time, that some advanced classes are not available every semester and that — regardless of their area of major study — they are required by the university to jump through some compulsory hoops (such as the writing proficiency examination) before they can graduate.

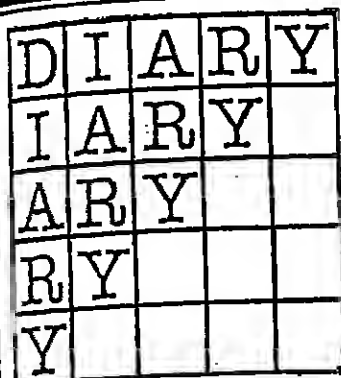
Discussing issues of this kind with members of faculty and registering in advance for their autumn classes is another summer-time activity for many students. And one only has to consider that there are 27,000 of them at Sacramento at any given time in order to appreciate something of the magnitude of the operation.

It is easy to get the impression from the media that Californian students expend most of their energies skiing, surfing and partying, and that they enrol at the university of their choice primarily in order to graduate in beer and pizza. But that is by no means the overriding impression I have gained in my first year of teaching here. There are plenty of Clarks and Loises out there, more than regular hours behind the lowered blinds of the lecture theatre and seminar rooms... even in high vacation.

Richard Adams is a visiting professor of English at the California State University at Sacramento.



Part-time dispensing isn't beer American style.



Pressing ahead

Now is the time that embarrassed parents are seeking explanations as to why their offspring didn't quite come up to scratch with their O and A level results.

I can't pretend to have all the answers to exam underachievement but I can make a shrewd guess why a few of the 280 maths O level candidates who sat the exam at the Associated Examination Board's special "London Centre" might not have done as well as they should.

The "centre" is a luxury 3-star hotel which offers, the brochure says, comfortable furnished accommodation with colour TV and trouser presses in every room.

Candidates who live outside London may overnight to ensure, or so the theory has it, they are at their best in the morning.

John Day, the AEB secretary general, is quick to point out that the board doesn't pay for accommodation and that exam failure cannot be put down to long nights pressing trousers or sampling in-house videos. "The students spend their time concentrating on passing their examinations," he explained.

I bet that's what they are telling their parents this morning.

Don't call us...

This is the third week running that we have carried a less than flattering story about the NUT and I really am sorry — some of my best friends are NUT members, honest.

But this I couldn't resist. Spotted phoned up inside the telephone booth in the entrance of the union's Hamilton House HQ the following notice: "This telephone does not accept incoming calls."

Bad timing

I know that August is the silly season, but that's no excuse for London Weekend Television broadcasting possibly the best programme on education in years at lunch time on a Sunday.

Not only is it on when all sensible men and women are either watching or playing cricket, it also goes by the nickname of "Educating Britain".

The official LWT explanation is the "midday on the Sabbath" is a "prestige" slot normally occupied by Matthew Parry and "Weekend World". All I can say is that I saw Mr Parry interview Mr Baker and "prestige" is not a word I would use to describe that performance.

Truth be told, I missed Sunday's broadcast and had to pester LWT's press office for a video.

Phone up the press office, demand a video (you can't play it back at school if you don't own your own) and ask that it be shown at a sensible hour. They won't give you the video but will get so fed up with the calls that the message might get through to the powers that be.

Economy masters

Cooperation at having no one to talk to the phone I look to skimming through the pages of a fascinating document — the membership lists of the National Association of Governors and Managers.

Improved illuminating reading and I am to understand why the DES is annoyed that governors, once they have control over the purse strings, will provide better value for money than spendthrift local authorities.

Previous members include Mr Geoffrey Howe and Mr Nigel Lawson. With governors of that calibre the schools' finances would be in safe hands, but I never allowed me on the subject of school financial success.

Acronym

NEWS

Michael Ryan was a 'quiet, shy, inoffensive' student. Sarah Bayliss talks to his former teacher

The schooling of a gunman



In memory: flowers for Hungerford

Pottering about in his workshop on a warm afternoon last week, Robin Tubb, a college lecturer in building and construction had his world shattered. The peace of a long summer holiday in Hungerford, his Berkshire birthplace where four generations of Tubbs have served as town criers, ended with the sound of gunfire and the bloody deaths of friends.

The enormity of what was happening outside his home in Priory Road, began to dawn as he tuned into the radio and, on the FM channel, picked up police messages about the local man who had gone berserk and who was holed up in the John O'Gaunt school across the road. Four police marksmen lay in Mr Tubb's front garden, eyes trained on the third floor classroom where, as a child, the gunman had probably sat through English lessons and where, eventually, he committed suicide.

"The phones were down and all afternoon we couldn't move. We knew it was somebody local but we didn't know who it was until I heard the police negotiators say 'Mr Ryan' and I said to my wife, 'Michael — it's Michael Ryan'."

Eleven years earlier Michael Ryan had been a reluctant student at Newbury College on a one-year foundation course in construction for a City and Guilds qualification.

"I found him just a quiet lad who was very difficult to teach because he was such a bad attendee. You have to remember it was 11 years ago with the ROSLA (Raising of the School Leaving Age) kids, some of whom were very reluctant to be at college. Some of them were of the lower ability range. It wasn't unusual to have kids like him."

"I was the course tutor and I had the bulk of the teaching to do. I remember him because he was just so quiet, inoffensive and shy. Maybe he was overprotected and indulged, it's not for me to say."

Sofer offers voucher proposal

The SDP's leading educationist this week called for a school voucher scheme to give parents a choice of schools and to end the political battles at next week's party conference in Portsmouth.

Mrs Anne Sofer, said all parents should be able to cash vouchers at state schools and independent schools that "opted in" to the system.

Such schools would have to meet four requirements:

- be recognized as efficient by Her Majesty's Inspectors;
- accept only vouchers, and not charge additional fees;
- not select children by test, report or interview;
- publish information, including exam results, in the form required by the Department of Education and Science.

Under Mrs Sofer's proposals, outlined in a discussion paper, local education authorities would fix the value of vouchers, with special weighting for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

All schools would employ their own staff and manage their own budgets, while i.e.s. services, such as training and educational psychology, might be turned into consultancies which they could buy into.

Mrs Sofer also suggested that the state should "buy" places in selected independent schools with high-quality sixth forms.

She called for higher salaries for teachers and a one-year Postgraduate Certificate of Education, based in institutions, by a system which linked off-the-job training with the first two years in schools. The present PGCE, she said, was "a waste of time and money".

But she also called for a new "graduate waiting list" to be set up for graduates waiting to go into the profession. She said that the waiting list should be "a list of graduates waiting to go into the profession".

'Assess schools by behaviour,' says DES

Continued from page 1

ment's work is to help schools ask the right questions about their own performance.

Data would be assembled from administrative records, pupil profile procedures, interviews with the public and questionnaires to pupils, parents, and potential employers. Performance indicators introduced to line with the paper's recommendations could be used by schools in standard ways so the information could be readily understood by parents and governors.

"Performance indicators should aid in reaching decisions. Common to all efficiency and effectiveness techniques is the need to define objectives clearly; to find out how existing practices serve these objectives; to ask whether there are alternative ways of meeting the objectives; to find out how much the various alternatives cost; and to ask if existing practices are leading to quality provision and value for money or if greater quality and value can be provided by making changes," the paper says.

It stresses that its proposals on social behaviour will need "extensive examination" and goes on to catalogue a list of possible objectives and methods of data collection.

An attendance objective might specify that "each class should have an average attendance throughout the winter and spring terms of 85 per cent or better". It adds: "Within the general objective for attendance, unauthorized absence would need to be monitored systematically against standards set by period of day and year of course."

"Truancy would need to be given a clear definition within the general description of unauthorized absence. Objectives would need to be set by year of course and time of year based upon a survey of recent experience, most likely based upon nationally set standards and conventions."

A disciplinary objective might aim at keeping the number of recorded disciplinary sanctions to below a certain percentage of pupil numbers. The approach and objective would be based upon nationally set standards. It will be for consideration whether an externally moderated objective by using any

police records, would also be appropriate. Close liaison with the local police authorities would be required to obtain suitable comparative statistics."

A second disciplinary objective might be to "keep the proportion of pupils found guilty of indictable offences below the average level for the age group within the locality".

The document notes that the behaviour of pupils is a "major concern" of parents, governors, staff and many members of the public.

Parents' and teachers' involvement in the assessment of behaviour might be built up through the inclusion of a sheet in the pupil's profile folders, it suggests. "But the extent to which members of the public should be expected to contribute to any assessment is also an important consideration."

A "discipline objective" might thus specify that "pupils' appearance to the public on arrival and departure from school should be classified as satisfactory or better by at least 90 per cent of those approached in a sample survey". Senior pupils could carry out the interviewing.

Questionnaires could elicit assessment in several areas, the paper argues. Parents could fill in a form about performance in extra-curricular activities.

And a questionnaire might be sent to local employers about their recent experiences in recruiting, training and retaining young people aged 16 to 19.

The inclusion of a section on post-schooling performance "implies that the school has a responsibility to have concern for the activities of its ex-pupils at least for a short period after leaving, say up to the age of 19", the paper explains.

An explicit reference in a school's report to governors to the socio-economic group of parents is unlikely to be acceptable or constructive of good relations," it notes. "Unless measures of the 16 plus group's intake ability were available, schools might be assisted by their L.E.A.s, with DES guidance, to assess their expected achievement in some other way."

The thought in developing the paper, the DES says, was to ensure that the "assessment of behaviour" was not "a mere exercise in self-censorship".

Hungerford has somehow escaped the transformation of other country towns in the south and many of its 5,000 inhabitants have roots going back as far as John of Gaunt who gave it a charter in the thirteenth century. The close ties in this hitherto uneventful place mean that Robin Tubb knew most of Ryan's victims — 16 dead and 13 injured — with the exception of three.

His 26-year-old son, a contemporary of 27-year-old Ryan, lost two childhood friends, Marcus Barnard, a taxi driver, and Francis Butler. Among those seriously injured is George Noon whom Mr Tubb has known since they were both apprentices for the same building firm.

"He lives four doors away and I see him every day. It's difficult to believe I haven't seen him for nearly a week."

The college term starts on September 7 and earlier this week there was work to do, interviewing new members of staff and checking the timetable for the 48 new students who have been accepted onto the course for the Construction Industry Training Board.

In the meantime Robin Tubb will begin to live with the shattering events of August, lending a hand to the town's disaster fund and the counselling service which has been set up with expert help. As a member of the town band committee — he plays the bass trombone — he helped take the awful decision to go ahead with their annual fête last weekend.

"The attendance was very high which I don't think was the ghoulish element. It was people wanting to talk and wanting to help."

As he was bashing tent pegs into the ground a television crew caught him unawares and suddenly he found himself talking about his personal ordeal.

"I suddenly opened up and it was like getting muck off the windscreen."

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1987

The chronic lack of science teachers and the impact of Mr Baker's educational reforms dominated discussion at this week's British Association annual meeting in Belfast. Ian Nash reports

Wide gap splits good and bad at maths

One in four school-leavers in Northern Ireland has an arithmetical age of 12 years or less in a recent study called the Trawl Project, designed to test how effectively pupils were prepared for adult life.

Numeracy tests confirmed that by UK standards the province had a good proportion of high-flyers, but a long tail of people who were barely numerate. Professor Peter Daws, head of the University of Ulster in-service education department, told the BAAS this week.

Many pupils of high ability lacked what was needed to conduct themselves effectively at work. "One finds the physics student with an inadequate knowledge of basic tools and electrical wiring, the arts student who completes an application form badly, and many who cannot apply simple arithmetic to understanding household tasks."

Awareness of further education and training courses on offer was "unexpectedly and disturbingly poor" and pupils seemed "ill informed" about how to achieve their desired goals beyond school, he said.

They revealed a similar lack of awareness of economic and financial matters, although their health knowledge, particularly regarding smoking and solvent abuse was "impressive". Fewer than one-in-three were good at completing job application forms, with girls proving considerably more capable than boys.

The results of the four-year project involving a representative sample of the province's 280 secondary, including grammar, schools are certain to be used as ammunition by critics of the selective system.

Polarization of academic achievement between the more and less able was already highlighted, particularly in mathematics, by work of the Assessment of Performance Unit in the early 1980s, which suggested that those suffering most were pupils of average ability.

The British Association is the country's leading forum for discussion about science in all its many aspects. More than 2,500 people gathered in Belfast this week and took part in 400 sessions. There was also an extensive programme of films, exhibitions and visits and numerous informal "get-togethers".



Anne Henry of Regent House grammar school in Newtownards, Northern Ireland, received a special award in the BAAS poster competition.

Baker attacked for trying 'too much, too quickly'

A blistering attack on virtually all the latest Government education initiatives was delivered by Sir Roy Harding, secretary of the Society of Education Officers.

Sir Roy accused the Government of "confused thinking" about the management of change in schools and said that too often educators were left to learn from "reliable" experience while essential in-service education and training was neglected.

Sir Roy, who is a member of the Higginson Committee Inquiry into A levels, laid into virtually every sacred cow of Mr Kenneth Baker, the Education Secretary, criticizing the Government for "premature" decision-making, inadequate research and "unrealistic" expectations.

While he believes the education profession welcomed the GCSE, he warned that the projected move from "norm" to criterion-referencing was being demoted without adequate research into the implications.

Too little thought and research had gone into describing and recording performance, the ambiguity of broad criteria, the meaning of mastery of ideas and the possible fragmentation of the curriculum.

Stinging out mathematics, he said: "Moreover, criterion-referencing could produce precisely the opposite effect to that recommended by the Cockcroft committee."

Namely, an emphasis on understanding and doing rather than memory.

"Too much is being attempted too quickly, however worthwhile the individual elements may appear to be, and often with an inadequate research base," he told delegates to the oldest organization established to debate issues affecting science policy and development in Britain.

Another cause for concern was the

rush to establish the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative as a "universal" scheme before its experimental phase was completed and while there was still considerable international disagreement over its value, with many countries now rejecting vocationalism in schools.

On top of the GCSE and TVEI, there was now the national curriculum. Some, but by no means all, of the ideas behind the proposal were to be welcomed, he insisted. "The proposed speed of action is unrealistic to anyone who has had any classroom experience and is baffling to those who have had any practical experience of introducing GCSE."

Furthermore, the stated intention of introducing tests at 7, 11 and 14 without prior consultation and consideration of the major problems involved, is "breathtaking", he said, citing examples such as Ontario where the imposition of a state wide curriculum has led education authorities to reject the use of such tests as unnecessary.

Local financial management, proposals for schools to opt out of local education authority control and moves for greater centralized control of the curriculum took away the opportunity for l.e.a.s and heads to plan and manage schools sensibly, he said.

Policy group upset by preferential pay call

Sir Kenneth Durham demanded more spending on science teaching in his presidential address.

But he caused a stir, upsetting leading members of the BAAS policy committee when, outside the meeting, he called for preferential pay rates for science teachers, saying "this is the law of supply and demand".

Majority opinion within the association is that positive discrimination in favour of any particular group militates against the best interests of encouraging teachers to work together and to share curriculum responsibilities.

In his speech, Sir Kenneth cautiously emphasized the need to increase resources to ensure broader access to science subjects for the benefit of the national economy.

"If this is not achieved, we could produce a community that is scientifically more illiterate than ours is today. It could mean that in less than 10 years the manufacturing industry of this country would be non-competitive in world markets," he said.

He criticized teachers for being "obsessed over the past 18 months by pay, status and negotiating conditions". While he felt there was some justice in their claims, he said "I do consider we have a right to expect they can still examine with objectivity, in a detached way, what are the fundamental educational needs."

The education system could not, however, be singled out for criticism. "We in the British Association recognize the problems that face us - the apathy of society at large; an education system that either reflects or promotes this apathy; industry which has been less skilful than international competition in harnessing new technology; governments, of whatever colour, who simply do not see clearly what is their role in either promoting the importance of science or funding research."

Looking to a festive future

All secondary schools in central England will be invited to take part in a major educational video film-making competition in the run-up to the 1987 annual meeting of the British Association, in Oxford.

Pupils will have until March to make films on a science subject of their own choice. The competition will be sponsored by Central Television and Oxford Films, who will provide a panel of judges, probably including the Oxford historian Anthony Barton.

The move is in line with plans to reshape radically future BAAS annual meetings, making them, in the words of Mr David Morley, the association's executive secretary, "more of a festival of science" or "scientific amusement arcade".

Full details of the competition will be announced next month and the final judging will take place next March, with the best of entries being shown at the Oxford annual meeting.

A spokesman for the BAAS said there would be 15 subject sections involved in the meeting. "We want them to organize activities not just for the five days of the meeting, but in the other 31 weeks of the year."

In future, there will be less reliance on formal lectures - with each section restricted to a maximum of 15 - and more emphasis on educational projects, visits and fun events. The aim is to "stimulate the scientific imagination of the BAAS meeting which have in more recent years been

Rallying round at a trial for misconduct

A misconduct hearing against 72 teachers who would not supervise examinations in 1985 has begun in Cape Town.

Costs are estimated to run as high as R100,000 (about £30,000). The teachers refused to administer the exams after several months of boycotts and school closures, saying pupils were not ready.

The hearings are held under the auspices of the Department of Education and Culture from the tricameral House of Representatives which purports to represent Coloured people. Many students stayed away from school during the hearings, which attracted hundreds of people to the first day.

The University of Cape Town academics were drawn into the arena when the University Academic Association objected to the hearings taking place.

A campaign called "The Hands Off Our Teachers Campaign" is supported by several groups including the United Democratic Front, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Cape Youth Congress, the South African Council of Sport and the Western Cape Teachers' Union.

The teachers could be dismissed, asked to resign, demoted, transferred, fined up to R400 (about £150), cautioned or reprimanded.

The number of pupils staying away in the Western Cape was aggravated by the shooting of Ashley Kriel, a young African National Congress cadre and former Western Cape student activist.

His death during a scuffle with police provoked demonstrations, violence and stayaways at 14 schools.

At the same time the Department of Education and Training (which looks after "African" education) closed Langa School, a Black high school in Cape Town, saying it wanted to "restore order" to resolve problems at the school.

Parents, students and prominent Western Cape leaders, including Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and World Alliance of Reformed Churches President, Allan Boesak, re-opened the school, calling the DET action "provocative".

Tension at the school began about two months ago when a group of athletes went on a DET-sponsored trip - against the wishes of most pupils.

The National Education Crisis Committee has pinpointed several problems at Langa, including overcrowded classrooms and a shortage of textbooks and furniture. The continued detention of several students, many of whose colleagues are "on the run", has inflamed an already hostile situation.

SOUTH AFRICA

Pat Sidley on one of the results of Cape Town teachers' refusal to supervise exams in 1985



Learning difficulties: boycotts and school closures add to the problems of students

Technology training plans set

Peter Gullford on grants to promote industry-university liaison

Projects that will be funded under the first phase of the European Economic Community's Co-operation in Educational Training in Technology programme have been announced.

COMETT aims to develop links between universities and industry to ensure that staff trained in new technology "meet companies' requirements".

Projects, selected from a total of 1,500, include the creation of a European network of 70 company-university training associations; 217 student training periods and 15 grants for industrial and university staff; and the development of in-service and multi-media training systems.

Some co-operation took place between the directorates' general responsible for education and for science and technology. It is therefore possible that projects will receive grants from both COMETT and DELTA.

The Commission's programme to encourage advanced learning through research co-operation among EEC industries and universities.

Now that the Commission's proposals for research spending have been passed, DELTA stands a good chance of approval.

Applications for the first stage of grants topped 85 million ECUs (about £50 million). Final expenditure, however, will be just 5.6 million ECUs (about £4 million).

One spokesman describes this as "a modest sum" but such is the EEC. There is a lot of money in the EEC. The first stage of the programme will be to set up a network of 70 company-university training associations.

Panel licks the Reagan stamp of approval

UNITED STATES

In a move seen by critics as a bid to put the ideological stamp of the Reagan administration on teaching throughout America, the US Education Department is setting up a "significance panel" to review the ethical merits of all Federally-funded projects.

In doing so, Mr William Bennett, the Education Secretary, is going directly against the wishes of the House of Representatives, which recently passed the School Improvement Act. This expressly prohibited the establishment of a significance panel, along with various other controversial changes proposed by the Department.

However, it will not become law until passed by the Senate, which is to consider similar legislation in the autumn. Unless and until the Senate rules otherwise, Mr Bennett is free to go ahead.

The panel, to be composed of teachers, parents, public representatives and education experts appointed by the Department, is seen as a move to placate conservatives who have

criticized Federal programmes for promoting secular humanism and undermining religious values. Its supporters argue that it would screen out programmes that endorse such unacceptable topics as racism, crime and brutality.

Opponents claim it will be used for ideological and political censorship, and that existing review procedures are quite sufficient. They have a point. Education programmes are currently screened by the diffusion network, a department headed by Ms Shirley Curry, former director of the conservative Eagle Forum. She was appointed after the forum had criticized previously approved education programmes for undermining parental authority, patriotism, religious faith, family cohesiveness and sexual abstinence.

It seems fair to assume that with the coming of Ms Curry, such programmes, if they existed, are no longer being approved. However, the Education Department has apparently decided that it needs a second tier of censors.

According to Mr Ronald Preston, the Deputy Assistant Secretary, the aim of the panel is to give more credibility to diffusion network programmes, by subjecting them to a stringent review that would prevent "grossly unethical" proposals from getting through. He denies, however, that the Department is trying to censor programmes objectionable to conservatives, claiming that it is attempting to give schools a better selection.

One Congressional aide commented: "Ron Preston will make up these great far-fetched examples about programmes that teach do-it-yourself abortions. But the panel has over had that problem. They're raising an issue that has never been an issue. Congress's attitude is: if there has never been a problem, why try to fix it?"

Bill Norris

Blooming early...

A supportive home where children are given the chance to develop their skills is the key to fame in areas like athletics, mathematics and music. This was the lesson drawn by Professor Benjamin Bloom, the distinguished American educationist.

Professor Bloom was reporting the results of a large research project to the seventh world conference on gifted and talented children, held at Salt Lake City. The project, undertaken at the University of Chicago and funded by the Federal Government, studied the early lives of 120 gifted individuals. Among these were outstanding mathematicians, musicians and Olympic gold medal winners.

The theme of the conference, "The Gifted and Talented: A World View", was to explore the factors that lead to the development of exceptional abilities.

One of the speakers, Dr. Howard Gardner, a Harvard psychologist, stressed the importance of a supportive home environment in the early development of a child's talents.

Dr. Gardner said that many of the gifted individuals he studied had parents who recognized their child's talents early on and provided them with the necessary resources and encouragement to develop their skills.

Showing Mr Baker the way

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Martin Kyndt on 12 years of reform in the Pacific

Some of the measures the Education Secretary intends to introduce in England and Wales are already tried and tested in a country not renowned in the West for radical education policy - Papua New Guinea.

Two aspects of Mr Kenneth Baker's reform programme - decentralization and a national curriculum - are established features of the educational structure in this former Australian territory.

Since the country's independence in 1975 education has played a central role in development initiatives and much progress has been made. A national curriculum and final examination, developed by a special unit, produces culturally relevant material. Each subject is supported by comprehensive teaching materials with the aim of achieving an equal standard throughout the country. This uniformity also aids mobility of labour.

Standards are maintained and monitored by an "inspectorial" structure with a wider brief than that of the HMI in Britain. School inspectors regularly assess the progress and ability of teachers, using performance guidelines. Those who fail to meet the minimum requirements face the possibility of disciplinary action that could, in extreme cases, lead to dismissal. Those who show potential are encouraged by the inspectors to apply for promotion.

Giving schools responsibility for their own budget is a central theme of Kenneth Baker's campaign for educational reform. In Papua New Guinea this is already a well-established practice. Funds are channelled from national government via the provincial governments (county councils) to each school. It is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that all aspects of the school are adequately funded. This responsibility includes budgeting not only for subject departments but also for maintenance and school meals.

Voluntary Service Overseas opened its Papua New Guinea programme in 1960 and has since played a significant role in the development of the country's education system by providing qualified teachers willing to work for local salaries with volunteer status. The programme was established in response to the Government's request for teachers and has since grown and diversified into other skill areas such as health and agriculture.

The savings achieved by attracting overseas staff willing to work for local wages have been channelled into curriculum development, service extension and other areas. Many volunteers have stayed on after their two years of service to take on senior responsibility in either the curriculum unit or as regional inspectors.

Nevertheless, the Papua New Guinea Department of Education and VSO have planned a phased withdrawal of volunteer support by the late 1990s, when it is hoped that enough national staff will be trained to create a fully independent system.

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Peter Congdon

LETTERS

Low priority

Sir - The reported remarks in Sue Surkes's article on the People's Republic of Kampuchea (TES, July 31) described only one aspect of the current Government's policy. Education may now be a top priority in the PRK but human rights certainly are not.

The genocide experienced under the Pol Pot regime may have passed with the collapse of that government, but the situation continues to cause concern. Amnesty International has more than 160 reports of torture between 1979 and 1986, and it believes that prisons in the PRK have held several thousand political prisoners in recent years. Conditions in these prisons are cruel, inhuman and degrading, and people are known to have died as a result of interrogation sessions or from malnutrition and weakness caused by the appalling conditions.

As an educationist I obviously applaud the PRK's attempts to rebuild the education system, but what about the people's right to live - free from terror and pain?

SUSAN MEW
Amnesty International member
Midshire group
Mildstone
Kent

Paper weight

Sir - If no one reads or comments upon the DES discussion documents, the consultation process will indeed be a charade (TES, August 14).

I urge teachers, and particularly teacher governors, to alert parents to the full implications of the proposals, and not to lose heart, but to make sure that constructive comments are made, that may at least lead to some modifications being made to the Bill.

As many parents as possible should see a copy of the curriculum discussion document, and it is worth writing to Honeyport Lane - my first letter produced at first (a stunned?) silence. After a second letter a week later, I was sent three copies, and yesterday a fourth arrived.

Mrs B H BEYBOER
Parent Governor 1983-87
Liskeard School
Dean Meadow
New Road
Liskeard
Cornwall

Circular politics

Sir - Jeremy Sutcliffe reports (TES, August 14) on the circular issued by the Secretary of State on the question of teaching politically controversial issues in schools. New legislation forbidding bias and indoctrination in the classroom comes into effect shortly.

Most of the circular is unexceptionable, but there is a danger in Mr Baker's suggestion that teaching staff should be "ready to acknowledge personal bias (and) make clear that on matters of opinion views other than their own may be legitimately held".

It is, however, surely the mark of a good teacher of controversial subjects and issues that in even-handedly putting forward differing approaches to contentious issues, his own preferences should not be apparent.

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Risks higher in science labs

First aid

Sir - The recent Professional Association of Teachers' report on the lack of first aid and other safety provision in schools (TES, July 31) highlights a problem identified in 1981 by the Institute of Science Technology, a professional institute which represents school technicians.

We recognized then a need for training school science laboratory staff in first aid, and introduced a training scheme for technical support staff in which first aid featured. Unfortunately few local authorities have expressed an interest in ensuring that technicians working in high risk areas such as chemical laboratories are adequately trained.

It is hoped that following the PAT report and the review being undertaken by the Department of Education and Science this position will be rectified.

Details of the IST training scheme and of a proposed one day course on first aid for science technicians, to be held in March next year, may be obtained from the Institute.

R WESTON
Chairman
Institute of Science Technology
73 Maygrove Road
Kilburn
London NW6

Why should a child be more capable of discounting the bias of a qualified teacher than that teacher should be capable of keeping his personal viewpoint out of his teaching?

Mr Baker's circular seems on this point to be giving partisan teachers the go-ahead to advertise their political prejudices in class, and then to seek refuge behind the claim that they were doing so only in order that pupils could make allowances for such prejudice.

The Secretary of State's circular should be rewritten to instruct teachers to keep their political opinions strictly to themselves.

COLIN SMITH
34 Greycoat Gardens
Greycoat Place
London SW1

Balancing act

Sir - The article by Jeremy Sutcliffe on the new AS levels (TES, August 14) is unduly pessimistic. He is correct in reporting that the idea of a broad sixth form course is not new.

At the King's School, Macclesfield, in the late 1940s I was studying physics, chemistry, and biology at principal level (equivalent to A level), mathematics and French at subsidiary level (probably equivalent to AS level) plus a fair amount of time spent on general studies, games and PE.

A reasonably balanced education at sixth-form level. The universities seemed to welcome us with open arms, and I was glad to read that they now seem to be at the hub of this "re-invention of the wheel".

A TORKINGTON
Principal Lecturer in Education
Edge Hill College of Higher Education
Grosvenor
Lancashire

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only.

Why families will go to Budapest for conductors

Sir - I read with interest the article on conductive education ("The conductor loses his place", TES, August 14). I have recently returned from Budapest where my eight-year-old son has spent a year at the Petö Institute.

He is to return for a second year because, despite having a wonderful teacher and dedicated physiotherapist at his special school at home, the results in Budapest over several decades suggest that his chances of learning to walk are significantly greater there.

When I read that The Spastics Society respects and applauds the work of the Foundation for Conductive Education and Rapid Action for Conductive Education, I was very pleased. Perhaps their joint endeavours would prevent future families being forced to go to Budapest to get the best for their motor-disordered children.

But then the contradictions. The Spastics Society is creating its own version of conductive education - and this will not involve training conductors. Not only is such training central to the programme of the Birmingham Foundation whose work they applaud, it is the key to the success of the whole system, as Dr Maria Hari, director of the Petö Institute, has pointed out many times. The importance of the trained conductor is reflected in the name of the system - "conductive education".

Further, the lack of success of Spastics Society schools already using their "own version" of conductive education (in particular Ingfield Manor), when measured against the progress achieved in "ordinary" special schools, has been documented by their own staff and others.

Mr Shephard, the society's chairman, claims that their "version" allows it to be used for more severely handicapped children than the Birmingham

project has chosen. I would not know, but I can tell Mr Shephard that the Petö Institute admits very severe cases indeed, as I have seen.

However, if there exists a group for whom conductive education is especially suited, as Mr Shephard seems to be implying (that is, less severe cerebally-palsied children), then why not develop it here for such children to begin with?

For the first time ever in this country conductor training, supervised by the Hungarians, is about to take place. The Spastics Society, despite "applauding" and "respecting" the initiative, is in fact confusing the public by calling their "version" conductive education. They are, moreover, not only giving no financial support, but diverting funds from conductor training by going along this path.

In adopting this approach, the Spastics Society has put back even further the day when real conductive education will be available in this country for all children for whom it is appropriate.

In the meantime, more and more families will be forced to go to Budapest, as more than a hundred have already this year. The Institute, already bulging at the seams, will be forced to refuse more and more children, and the desperation and misery will continue for them and their families. Time is not on their side.

I hope Mr Shephard and the rest of The Spastics Society strategists know something of the suffering their actions are causing. If they really want conductive education, then they should join forces with the Birmingham Foundation. With their joint resources and skills, they might eventually be able to think about adopting conductive education. But first we must have it.

T HANLEY
54 Gilnow Road
Bolton



Russian roulette

Sir - It is often assumed that dyslexia, if it exists at all, is a relatively new phenomenon. I was fascinated to find a description of an obvious case of dyslexia in Maxine Gorky's 'My Childhood', although this was published in 1913. Gorky describes a member of his gang in about 1880 who was very jealous of Gorky because he could read.

Gorky describes how he read a shop sign as "Grocetles". "Grocetles, you put," corrected Churka. "The letters keep jumping about and changing places".

"They jump, just to show they're glad someone's reading them!" Can anyone produce an earlier literary description of a dyslexic boy?

R SOMERVELL
Cook House
Leyton
Kent

Remedial needs

Sir - The new funding arrangements for in-service education are causing concern to those working in the field of special educational needs. It is right that local authorities should be seeking value for money and an expansion of school-based activity should prove to be a rewarding investment. However, the National Association for Remedial Education fears that other forms of vital in-service may not be sustained.

For example, the current rearrangement of grants will substantially reduce the number of teachers pursuing important specialist courses, often in minority areas of work. The demise of these in-depth, award bearing courses would, in the long term, greatly diminish the professional expertise available.

Also, NARE and other voluntary associations require local authority support if they are to operate effectively.

Word power

Sir - I have followed with interest your recent articles and correspondence concerning the writing of school reports. Yet I cannot help feeling that we have missed the point while worrying about the packaging.

"Whether we choose to use the 'booklet approach' or 'comment banks' or 'pick box' format that Mr T.A. Brethel describes (Letters, TES, July 31), surely it will be the words therein that possess the power to please or displease the reader, whoever he or she may be."

I am sure many of us have described the child who refuses to join in with class discussions as, for example, "uninterested", "lazy", "shy" or perhaps "thoughtful", depending on our personal interpretation of such behaviour, when all we could objectively say was that "X" doesn't contribute to class discussions.

Daily struggle

Sir - I regret that Sue Surkes' article "The conductor loses his place" did not fully expose the scandal of The Spastics Society having £168,000 raised by the Stars Organisation for Spastics and a "generous" donation of £70,000 towards the development of "adapted" conductive education. The Spastics Society has no right to use the term conductive education; it does not aim for children to function for themselves.

This money should be directed towards the recently-established National Foundation for Conductive Education.

The Spastics Society, originally set up by parents with cerebral-palsied children, is ignoring thousands of parents pleading for true conductive education in Britain.

The follow-up BBC1 programme to Standing up for Joe, due to be screened in October, will demonstrate the strength of feeling among British families who have made it to Budapest. British brain-injured children have a right to have access to the Petö method. Sue Surkes' article was as convoluted as The Spastics Society press statement of August 7.

The families of spastic children already have a struggle on their hands on a day-to-day basis, yet the organization which is supposed to represent their interests continues to bury its head in the sand and follow the established order and attitude towards brain-injured children.

As the mother of a severely brain-injured child whose motivation we have only properly discovered through his exposure to conductive education, I am disappointed that "our" organization, The Spastics Society, continues to renege on our children. Conductive education may not be a panacea for cerebral-palsied children and their families, but it does help more than 70 per cent of Hungarian brain-injured children. Are our children so different?

JULIA WILKINSON
4 Acadia Grove
West Dulwich
London SE21

In next week's News Focus, the director of the newly-established Birmingham Institute for Conductive Education describes the four-year project to bring conductive education to the UK.

ly. We feel that our in-service contributions, at local and national levels, have had a major positive influence on thinking and practice in both mainstream and special schools. Some of us have been very generous in subsidizing local NARE branches for example, in providing accommodation for courses and helping with expenses. They have also been ready to give financial assistance to teachers attending our national courses, thus giving the opportunity for a wide dissemination of good practice.

We hope that such generosity will continue - indeed, that it will be extended to all local authorities.

MIKE OORDON
President
NARE - serving special educational needs
28 The Glade
Fulford Road
Scarborough
North Yorkshire

If this sounds a comparatively vacuous statement and we feel our role is to provide an explanation, then it would not be fair on the child if we qualified it in some way, for example, "X doesn't contribute to class discussions and so gives the impression of being uninterested/lazy/shy/thoughtful".

To avoid time-wasting, space-filling exercises and instead to produce meaningful and thereby useful communications, I feel it is our words that need attention.

"We surely could not be criticized for replacing subjective statements and judgemental language with objective, non-labellous truths".

AMANDA GEARY
The World Church of England
(Alded) middle school
Boare Green
Dorking
Surrey

ANNUAL MEETINGS

A grotesque charade

Kelth Morrison

I have just had the sobering experience of attending as a parent the new annual meeting of parents and governors and it appears that the accountability of teachers and governors to parents is long overdue.

Contrary to current trends, the meeting at the primary school had more than the 20 per cent required attendance for decisions to be taken, which suggested well for an exchange of information and possibly the passing of resolutions. This proved to be a chimera when the chairman opened the meeting with the announcement that matters arising would receive only the consideration of the governors; decisions would not be taken.

There followed a ritual verbatim reading of a previously circulated governors' report - barely two sides to represent a year to the life of a school. When questions and discussion were invited, the hidden agenda of the meeting became apparent - laudatory comments were acceptable, anything less than that, or questions for information were treated as a confrontation of wills and as a challenge to the authority of the governors, who then closed ranks.

Questions about the curriculum were parried rather than answered by the headteacher, the weight of whose authority rested on his declared rejection of what he termed the "new" Nuffield mathematics. Common-sense enquiries about a multi-cultural curriculum had one councillor in his own words "bothered, bewildered but not bewitched". The chairman of the governors asked how many extra teachers would be required to implement it, another questioned if it was appropriate for primary children. Another described it as irrelevant. When issues were only slightly pressed, parents were treated either to

a brusque retort or to a flippant response.

A grotesque scene in which one governor agreed with another whose comments had been almost content-free, would have been funny had it not been for real, about real children and real parents.

What could have been a marvellous opportunity for clearly supportive parents to receive information about the school turned out to be a thoroughly depressing event. The wilful ignorance of governors was appalling. As a parent the secret garden of that school's curriculum retained its secrets.

If such meetings are to be more than charades with leading participants posturing to conceal ignorance or lack of interest, then there is an urgent need for governors and headteachers to receive adequate training in their preparation and handling. With the public and political spotlight turned on governing bodies, the behaviour of education ostriches will no longer be acceptable: the self-indulgence of a councillor "bothered and bewildered" is intolerable.

Other public institutions would not attract the rearing of their services to the ignorant. Why should the gravity of preparing a future generation of adults be jeopardized by incompetence?

I am reminded of one reason why I relinquished a post as a primary schoolteacher. I was disgusted at being interviewed and subsequently employed by a panel whose membership included those with little or no insight into, or understanding of, education in contemporary society.

Kelth Morrison is Lecturer in Education at the University of Durham



NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Learning from the French

Rhuna Winstanley

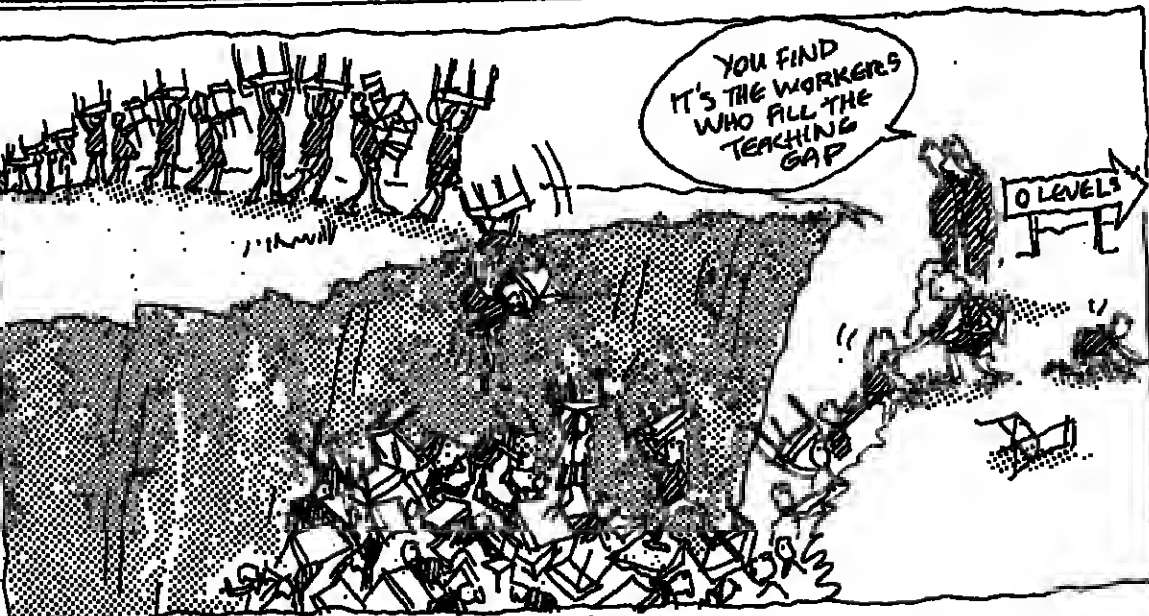
room, giving help where it was most needed. The able and enthusiastic assistant, with a succession of inventive questions needed him just as much as the slow learners who patiently and painstakingly applied themselves to a similar task.

The children were horrified to learn that their English counterparts were not always required to do homework. "But how will they learn all they need to know?" said one 10-year-old.

On a visit to another classroom, in the region but in a different village, I spent a morning at an école maternelle, a state nursery school for 2½ to 5-year-olds.

Eighteen of the youngest children, with a teacher and an unqualified assistant, were to a high-windowed classroom which had been converted to give modern nursery facilities. The room was colourful and bright, in the room was a traditional, beebot, a red toy car with a music box inside, decorated with mobiles and murals made by the children.

The morning programme was carefully structured, but in such a way as to encourage independence and allow for individual expression. The children worked purposefully and happily at



ABSENTEE TEACHERS

Victims of innovation

Esther Bradbury

was right, the supply teacher was often unfamiliar with the course or had a totally different method of teaching, so the effect was almost always disruptive. And unfortunately, even in the fifth year, there is an almost irresistible urge to play up a supply teacher, which makes it difficult for much work to be done in those lessons, which tend to be regarded as a "skive".

Although we realised how vital the year was to us, it was difficult not to lose heart when it seemed that our access didn't matter much to the teachers who had previously lectured us on its importance.

There were some days when I would go to school and not have one of my real teachers for the whole day, and there were weeks when staff absences added up to two or more days of my time-table. I would sit through lessons thinking that there was no point in my being there, that I might as well be at home getting it all out of text books, with all these new ideas, will children receive a proper education. The pupils who are in school now are just as important as those future generations who are being so busily planned for and who will theoretically benefit from all this talk; yet we have been made to feel a forgotten year while teachers prepare themselves for the real work to come when we are out of the way.

However reactionary it may sound, I would appreciate it if their teachers would stop talking to each other about teaching and would concentrate on doing it.

In the anxious planning for the future, the children actually in school now are in danger of being forgotten. It is implied that everything that has previously been taught is now lost, with all these new ideas, will children receive a proper education. The pupils who are in school now are just as important as those future generations who are being so busily planned for and who will theoretically benefit from all this talk; yet we have been made to feel a forgotten year while teachers prepare themselves for the real work to come when we are out of the way.

My parents are teachers, and their conversation has recently become littered with initials and jargon: GCSE, CPVE, JUPVE, VVEI, ATW. In absences with teachers of the appropriate subjects, but this was not always possible; and even when the subject

difficulties grown from bulbs the children had planted.

The teacher at the école maternelle is visited regularly by a regional inspector. The inspector will expect to see each pupil's folder of work and the record-sheet, which the teacher completes each day, showing in which of the structured activities the child has achieved competence. In this way, early difficulties can be monitored. The inspector will also require to see examples of collage and junk-modelling reflecting the pattern of work throughout the year. Much of the work is topic-based, and evidence of this is expected.

Dr Broadfoot's suggestion that pressure from parents and the community can be disregarded in France may be true, but this particular nursery teacher holds meetings for the parents at which she explains the educational purposes of the activities she sets, and the philosophy on which she bases her planning. There is also an Open Day, when parents can see not only their children's work, but their children working.

At both the schools I visited playground duty was carried out by all the teachers, who seemed to accept joint responsibility for the children.

I was conscious that the teachers in these schools were working with a much greater degree of quality control than we have yet experienced in Britain, but it was also evident that they maintained a high degree of commitment to the education of the individual child, in the broadest sense, and were

not simply "teaching to the test", even though this was recognized by them as one of their duties. It was clear, too, that a national curriculum does not preclude breadth, balance, and differentiation.

It could be that French teachers are not as practised as their English counterparts in articulating their objectives, although those I met seemed happy to talk to me about their "pedagogy". It could also be that the French teachers in the survey gave the answers which they felt were expected of them - even the English education system trains us to do that.

A third possibility is that, despite a national curriculum, good teachers, French and English, will continue to work in the best interests of their pupils.

Rhuna Winstanley is senior lecturer in education at the College of St Paul and St Mary, Cheltenham.

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The last frontier?

Lessons in human values from Peshawar
by Mike Miles

Formal facilities for disabled persons have customarily been squeezed from the fat of society - bestowed charitably upon those perceived as deserving "victims". Can roles be reversed, turning handicapped or disadvantaged children into dynamic contributors to a rapidly-changing social system? Such an experiment began 13 years ago at the Mental Health Centre, Peshawar, in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province.

The circumstances have been inauspicious. Fielding mentally-retarded small girls or multi-handicapped teenage lads as social revolutionaries, in an economically backward region renowned for male chauvinism, blood feuds and staunchly unreconstructed Islam, seems a Quixotic venture. However, it has seen some success. The Mental Health Centre was founded in 1972 by John Bavington, a British psychiatrist. Facilities for the mentally ill then comprised an old-style lunatic asylum and indigenous remedies by holy men at shrines. Bavington and his colleagues attempted a "therapeutic community" approach to psychiatry, and a community mental health scheme, innovations which fell on stony ground. Lacking adequate staffing and funds, they were finally choked by hospital politics in 1977.

One activity survived: a playgroup for mothers with mentally-retarded children. Some severely depressed Pukhtun women, attending for psychiatric treatment, provided the stimulus for this playgroup to start in 1974. They all had disabled children, a source of grief and shame unrelieved by any information on home management. The playgroup met some of their needs and, when the main psychiatric work collapsed, it inherited buildings, goodwill and the demands of the frontier population of 12 million.

In 1978, Christine Miles, a Welsh special school teacher, took charge of the playgroup. Martial law had recently been declared by General



What place is there for special education when half of Pakistan's 40 million children never go to school?

Zia-ul-Haq, himself the parent of a handicapped child. The International Year of the Child (1979) followed, with a focus on childhood disability that intensified during the Year of Disabled People (1981). A small current of events began to flow in favour of a previously invisible segment of society.

Over five years the playgroup became a school for 40 mostly and multi-handicapped pupils, with staff training and a physiotherapy unit. Literature was produced for family counselling - *The Pakistan Times* reprinted one advice pamphlet, occupying its entire correspondence column. These resource and training facilities became the dynamo to start small rehabilitation

centres run by community groups in eight Frontier towns.

Looked at like this, the growth seems remarkable. In fact, it penetrated a multiplicity of social and religious barriers. Staff members, facing handicapped children's demands for acceptance, learnt to cross other gulfs that normally divide communities. Here, against custom, Pukhtuns and Punjabis, Muslims, Christians and Balmikis, speakers of Pushto, Hindko and Urdu, males and females, townspeople and village dwellers, work together in harmony - with periodic upsets. When the peace is breached, I appeal to them. "If we can't work together here, respecting one another's differences, what hope

for Pakistan?"

The school system is a museum-piece left over from Victorian Britain. Half of Pakistan's 40 million children never enter school and those who do, half fail to complete primary education. Eight out of 10 adults cannot read. Population growth far exceeds provision of schools. What place for special education?

An important place, I believe. First for the sake of human rights, equality of esteem and opportunity. Supported in theory by the ideologies current in Pakistan - Islam, Socialism and more bag of Western values - this argument is attenuated by the poverty of educational facilities for the rest of the population. A more powerful

Degrees of enterprise

The traditional honours degree is not the only way to bring students alive intellectually, argues
Gerald Collier

everyday reality in contemporary institutions whose prevailing culture is dominated by specialised didactic teaching.

In the simplest, most modest form this means building the units of study, in freshly minted courses, on problems or questions that have that bit of reality which will engage the students at some depth, being in many cases derived from their first-hand observation; and incorporating a good deal of informal small-group work into lectures and seminars, using "buzz groups" and similar techniques to analyse specific concepts or cases within the formal context.

Such approaches have been cogently argued and persuasively presented in the publications of the Further Education Unit (FEU), and more recently by BTEC in its series of documents on the practical implementation, inside and outside the classroom, of its policies for developing students' powers of thought and personal initiative. The policy documents of the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education have a similar orientation. Thus for the 16-21 age group there is a rather general shift of policy and practice in this direction, which, however, has not yet penetrated very far into the world of specialist, academic teaching.

At its most ambitious, a policy of building on peer-group co-operation would be implemented in one or other form of "syndicate" method. In one version of this technique a class of (say) 25 students is divided into syndicates of five students. The material to be studied is presented in the shape of a series of assignments to be handled on a team basis. An assignment consists of a problem or task composed perhaps of a set of sub-tasks and a resource list of book chapters, journal articles, first-hand observations, audio-visual material, computerized data and/or other

documentation, specified in detail and readily accessible. The task of searching the various sources is divided between the members who then hammer out between them the views they develop on the topic under review. The intensive debate within the syndicates is the heart of the technique: the members of a given syndicate have searched different sources, perhaps imported different personal experiences, and they have no knowledge of what the lecturer or the department regards as orthodox.

Each syndicate produces a written report of its views, including (if the members wish) a record of any dissent. The tutor circulates a summary of the reports for debate at a plenary session, with whatever corrections of misunderstandings or imbalances are needed. It is no less essential here than in a customary course that the students should emerge from each phase with a firm command of the developing conceptual structure and the supporting evidence.

Practical stages? The design of assignments calls for skill and imagination: they must not only have an immediate significance for the students but carry them forward into the assessment of concepts and evidence, and the evaluation of arguments which develop their powers of critical

judgement. Accessibility of source material can be a problem: detailed arrangements have to be made with the library and a bookshop.

More important, the roles of the teacher and the students are radically different from their previous experience and it is not always easy for either party to adjust: for students to overcome their dependence on institutional orthodoxy and customary assessment systems or for teachers to divest themselves of the habit of didactic authority. Nor is it always easy for teachers to establish the kind of openness or candour needed in the more informal and personal setting.

More important still, the students are spending considerably more time and effort on the "deep processing" of the subject matter, on digging down into the inner core of the arguments and assessing their validity, than when they are struggling to assimilate the material of their lectures and textbooks. It is consequently vital that the method of assessment should give adequate scope for the higher intellectual skills and avoid the heavy concentration of basic material which dominates many customary examinations. The climate of opinion in the institution must be such to make this practicable, and time must be taken to demonstrate to students the purpose and structure of the alternative methods of assessment.

In a slightly different version of the technique used in a medical school in Australia, a year-long group of students is divided into syndicates of eight members and the units of study are a series of "problem boxes". Each of these consists of a clinical problem, at a level of complexity suited to the stage reached by the class, presented in the form of an audio or video cassette and a set of reports and records, together with a sequence of questions to be followed through and a complex

argument is that society badly needs the human space and experimental elbow-room that go with special education; plus the humility, peace and joy that special kids contribute. Special education can be a two-way process - not just something that society does (or fails to do) to handicapped children.

Faced with a pupil who is unable to learn by rote, the teacher must rethink the whole business of learning. In the ordinary school such thoughts are not permissible - pupils who fail to conform are ejected. The special school then remains the sole test-bed for innovation, indeed for revolution - Copernicus enters the classroom when the educational Universe ceases to revolve around the teacher.

"Montessori, Pestalozzi, Popocatepetl will steal their hearts away."

Beyond school, people with special needs contribute their invaluable demand for flexibility. Young women who, through mental handicap, confirm neither the legal expectation of personal responsibility nor the social expectation of marriage and child-bearing, require and extend of legal and social space in which to live and

The difference between remaining "human junk" or leading a life with human dignity will depend upon their countrymen'

move. Both Pakistan and Britain recently moved their highest legal machinery to accommodate such individuals. The Pakistan case, in which a mentally and visually impaired servant was imprisoned for the "crime" of being impregnated by her master, provoked nationwide fury until the Supreme Court cleared her.

On a broader plane, most developing countries face increasing lack of congruence between population, skills and jobs, exacerbated by uneven distribution between neighbouring communities. The gap widens steadily between powerful resource-controlling elites and the jobless, uneducated, driven masses. Among the latter, extension of basic health care causes an increasing number to survive severe childhood impairments, epidemics and accidents, to become powerless, disabled adults at the bottom of every human junkheap.

For these millions, the difference between remaining "human junk" or leading a life with human dignity will depend upon their countrymen discovering some models for celebrating difference, perceiving wholeness in spite of disability, formulating a new mathematics for accounting human value. Pupils in Pakistan's special schools are making their contribution to this vital research.

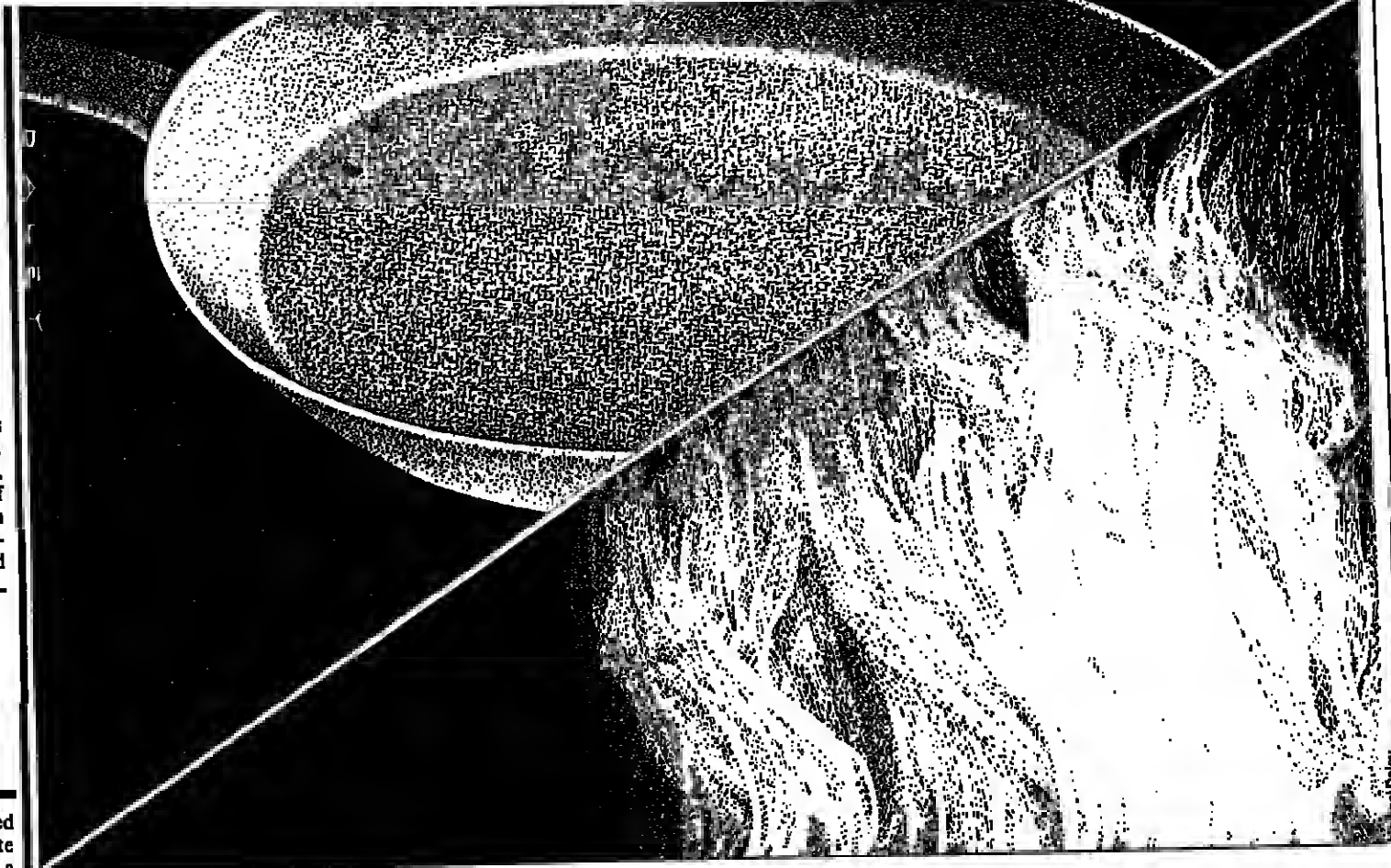
specific references to easily accessible sources. The internal procedures in the syndicates are similar to those described earlier, but the relationships in these larger groups tend to be more formal, less intimate.

The organization of an academic course on this basis does two things: it generates greater involvement of the students in their studies, and with this a shift of focus from the satisfying of the teacher's requirements to an understanding of the realities under scrutiny; and it engages the students from the start in the exercise and development of the higher order skills. Other kinds of competence are also fostered: a capacity for effective team work; a commitment to individual enterprise. In many cases teachers and pupils working for A-level examinations might well find in such an approach a more appropriate preparation for higher education than the more formal didactic style.

There are three main obstacles to such a development. The first is the fact that most of those who design degree courses have never experienced the dynamism generated in a syndicate-based context and cannot therefore attach any reality to the idea, or to its potential. As McGregor once remarked, "our experience with really effective groups has been so limited that we do not have clear standards of what could be".

The second obstacle is summed up in the poverty about the good being the enemy of the bad: teachers accustomed to witnessing the sluggish progress of their ablest pupils under good conventional teaching are not easily convinced of the need to create fresh course structures for a different range of students pursuing different sets of objectives.

And finally, new degree courses on such lines will not attract students unless they are actively marketed: as the Council for Industry and Higher Education has urged, the crucial need in economic terms is not for calculating the "demand" for currently available courses but for actively marketing new types of course and creating the demand.



Without the option

David Forbes describes the Scottish experience of direct government funding

It is interesting that Scottish schools are to be denied the opportunity to opt out of local authority control by becoming directly funded by the Government, at least for the time being. In part, this reflects the fact that they have as yet no boards of governors ready to take charge, as in England. Nor has Scotland experienced the controversial policies of so-called "loony-left" authorities to provide an excuse for such legislation.

Scots, with over 90 per cent of pupils in maintained schools, probably have a stronger perception of local authorities as the normal providers of educational facilities than English parents. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Secretary of State for Scotland, with few Conservative colleagues to support him, is unwilling to embark on a course of action which the vast majority of Scots would regard as totally irrelevant.

But Scotland does have some experience of directly funded educational institutions, experience which may provide a further explanation for Scottish suspicions of the opting-out proposal and which may serve as a cautionary tale for schools and colleges in the South. Scottish colleges of education and central institutions have for many years been financed by a recurrent grant from the Scottish Office and are run by boards of governors. In theory, at least, they are autonomous institutions. In practice, however, the recent

'Cuts are more easily accomplished when the Government holds the purse strings'

history of the colleges of education suggests that direct funding often leads to less rather than more institutional security and less institutional autonomy.

In 1978, there were 10 rollings of education in Scotland which, between them, produced most of Scotland's teachers through their monopoly of diploma and postgraduate courses and their near monopoly of the BEd degree. Stirling University was the only other institution providing maintenance for the training of teachers. An attempt by the Labour administration to reduce the number of colleges failed in 1977 partly because of resistance from its own backbenchers but also because of the vigorous efforts of the opposition parties and of such as George Younger and Alec Fletcher. Since 1978, successive Conservative administrations, the first with the same George Younger as Secretary of State for Scotland, have reduced the 10 colleges to five. Staff numbers are less than half those of 1977. There are fears that there are more cuts to come.

Such cuts are not unique but arguably they are more easily accomplished when the Government itself controls the purse strings. Whereas in the English colleges were able to diversify their

activities and become colleges of higher education, this option was denied to the Scottish colleges some of which, for example, proposed introducing DipHE courses but were turned down. As far as the Scottish Office has been concerned, diversification has been restricted to renting or selling surplus accommodation with the income generated being retained not by the colleges but by Government.

A local authority might be able to act as a buffer providing some protection from a central government determined on cuts and might be more responsive to local needs and feelings. The more remote politically and geographically the source of funding, the less responsive is it likely to be to local opinion. At a time of falling rolls, this should cause any school or college considering opting out to pause for thought. From the point of view of the individual member of staff, being employed by the board of governors rather than by the local authority might place him or her at risk. If an institution controlled by a local authority does have to be closed, staff can be redeployed in its other institutions. The independent board of governors has no alternatives to offer.

Nor is it simply a matter of the survival or demise of colleges. Over the past 10 years the Scottish Office has involved itself more and more with the internal affairs of individual colleges, precisely on the grounds that it is the paymaster. When this occasionally provoked some resistance, new legislation was introduced to undermine the autonomy of the Scottish colleges of education. These new regulations, enacted just before the dissolution of the last parliament, reduced the size of boards of governors ostensibly to achieve greater efficiency and economies. In practice it has meant a reduction in the representation of consumer interests - students, teachers, and local authorities - and a strengthening of the influence of the Secretary of State's nominees on the boards. A further step in this direction was the removal of each board's right to elect its own chairman. Now the Secretary of State makes this decision. The regulations also require boards to supply the Scottish Office with any information it may require, including quite specific details of each lecturer's workload.

Staffing provides a good example of the extent to which the Scottish Education Department has largely usurped the functions of the boards of

governors. For many years the Scottish Office has used staff-student ratios to determine the staffing entitlement of each college. Though this formula was imposed rather than negotiated, it acquired a kind of recognition. Promotion was based on a points system. Together with the Scottish Office's control of funds these factors prevented boards from doing anything outrageous while leaving them the freedom to decide how best to meet the needs of their own colleges.

Now, however, the Scottish Office has replaced staffing entitlement with the notion of staffing ceilings, that is, the absolute maximum allowed to be employed, and not necessarily funded by the Scottish Office as staffing entitlement was. No appointments can be made without the prior approval of the Scottish Education Department, even if they are straight replacements of departing lecturers. Colleges may find themselves short of essential staff because the civil servants wish to quibble over the grounds for appointing them. Similarly, boards may find the Scottish Office refusing to accept proposals for changing promotion structures even when these accord with the agreed formula, and the money is available. Remote civil servants rather than the board actually trying to run the college decide on the junior management structure.

There are other examples of the Scottish Office undermining the autonomy of colleges of educa-

'Colleges may find themselves short of essential staff because civil servants quibble over the grounds for appointing them'

tion. Some have lost courses as part of a rationalization of provision initiated by the Scottish Education Department. The regulations now lay down conditions as to the size and composition of academic boards, but boards of governors still have to submit their proposals to the Scottish Education Department for its approval. Far from being independent bodies, the boards of governors of the colleges of education have become functionaries of the Scottish Office, while the academic staff have been increasingly deprived of the involvement in policy making which they once enjoyed.

There may be a lesson in all this for any English school or college which envisages opting-out of the state sector as a means of achieving independence. The dangers may outweigh the advantages. It might just turn out to be a case of out of the frying pan of local authority control into the fire of a Government determined to enforce its policies.

David Forbes is a lecturer at Glasgow College of Education.

ARTS

Edinburgh
Writing
wrongs

Children's writing in primary schools was a "menu of mundane domesticity," an authority on the subject told a TES Scotland seminar on Making Reading Matter at the Edinburgh Book Fair last Friday. Other speakers worried about the status of reading among young people and their parents. But a leading Scottish novelist cautioned against "missionaries being sent out to convert the natives" in good reading.

The attack on young pupils' writing came from Mr Bill Jackson, a retired college lecturer who directed a major project in Scotland on the Foundations of Writing. It found that "chill uniformity" was the chief characteristic of children's writing. "Pupils write inadequately because they are carefully and consciously taught to write inadequately. If you talk to primary teachers, they'll say writing is about handwriting skills, or it's a gift, or it happens." They take the Plutarchian Platitude approach.

Mr Jackson said compositional skills were not even identified far less taught in primary schools. Writing was rarely seen as a way of retelling experience, it was "totally without meaning," and was often a cynical exercise to let teachers hear other pupils read - the "help me make it through the day"

syndrome. He added that "a writing-led curriculum can achieve spectacular results. It touches everything that goes on in the curriculum: teachers in our project school told us that they hadn't realized how writing could show what children were capable of, and how they had underestimated what they were capable of."

Mr William McIlvanney, the novelist, suggested that adults should be modest enough to learn from children. "We should not assume what's good reading or good writing because we don't often know what good is." His young mind had been seized by the *Rover*, the *Hotspur* and the *Wizard*. The author of *Docherty* and *Laidlaw* said "books should have no special place of privilege in our society: they have it if they earn it." To define sensibility as a rare thing possessed by a few was to demand philistinism for the rest.

Liz Attenborough, editorial director of Puffin Books, which notches around 12 million sales a year, asked why books should have such a "precious image." It seemed acceptable for toys to be damaged but not books. "You know the sort of thing - that's a nice book, we'll put that aside till she's older." She thought a fundamental problem was the status of children in adult lives. "Children's authors are often asked when they are going to write a real book."

Status was also an issue for Mrs Lorraine Fanning, director of the Scottish Publishers Association and owner of a children's bookshop. The problem lay more with adults than with children, she felt. "We have got to challenge the television, the video, the hands-on computer experience." She added: "How many teachers feel they are not doing anything if they're reading to the whole class: we're not getting anywhere, we're just reading."

Ms Margaret Mortimer, children's librarian in Edinburgh, suggested that reading was a class issue, not in terms of interest or ability but in terms of access. She called for "libraries without walls" with books being taken out into the community.

Neil Munro

Energy
and wit

The Vigorous Imagination: New Scottish Art.
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art until October 25.

If the current, much-publicized upsurge in Scottish art has its roots in the twin staples of the figure and colour, the National Gallery of Modern Art's Edinburgh Festival exhibition amply demonstrates the range of uses to which they can be put. The show includes the most prominent of the new young artists: painters Steven Campbell, whose mock-intellectual subjects and titles are settling into a rather too-mannered painting style, and Adriano Wozniakowski, and sculptor - if that is the appropriate description - David Meach.

Meach's "Avalanche," made from newspapers with a weird variety of objects - a bench, a Van Gogh, blocks of wood, a plaster statue - scattered over them, cascades into the room these three share from the shuttered windows, built on site to be instantly disposable afterwards. Kate Whiteford and Sam Ainsley's contributions - the first a dimly lit room of red and green abstract lines, the other a series of hangings on the connecting staircases (each a huge banner draped from the front of the gallery) - share that sense of being an installation.

With the exception of Whiteford and Philip Braham's luminous, twisted forest scenes, the figure dominates the painted works. Stephen Conroy is surely set to follow in Campbell's steps: his superbly drafted, oddly anachronistic figures seem to belong to the turn of the other century, but possess a very contemporary angst. Very different, but equally striking, Peter Howson's series of heroic studies of Glasgow dockers exhibit a strange dignity, while his grotesquely drawn, large canvases on sporting subjects strip bare the crude, barbarous emotions of his protagonists. "Just Another Bloody Saturday," with its nightmarish caricature football crowd claustrophobically enclosing the play, is particularly striking, and typical of the artist's artificial use of colour.

Typical, too, of the way most of these painters approach representation: the figure may have returned to prominence, but these are the Eighties, and constantly revitalized forms are required. June Redfern absorbs her figure within an abstract colour field; Ken Currie's squashed up roomful of workers planning a better future update Stanley Spencer's Clydeside masterpieces; Joseph Uribe's figures blend into their spectral landscapes; Ian Hughes' massive heads melt in rivulets of dripping paint; Owen Har-



Ian Hughes "Kierling" 1985

die finally reduces it all to one huge, clenched fist.

Of the other artists represented, Calum Colvin and Ken O'Donnell produce contrasting contemporary photo-montages, while Mario Rossi and Keith MacIntyre play serious games with classical and semi-mythical subjects. The Vigorous Imagination does not pretend to do more than showcase a cross-section of contemporary Scottish Art, but it provides irrefutable evidence of the energy, invention and wit of this generation of young artists. Which of them has real staying power remains to be seen, but this exhibition confirms all of them as serious contenders.

Kenny Mathieson

work of dramatic contrast that made considerable demands of all the players, not just the youngest or least experienced. Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain" was delivered with a predictable reliability and enthusiasm.

It is not always easy to convince a youth orchestra who there may be conflicting demands from foreign tourists for those players who belong to more than one band. Edinburgh's Carities Orchestra had problems in organizing its Glasgow personnel and the sense of ensemble was sometimes lacking in its predominantly classical programme.

The Overture to *La Cenerentola* of Tito was, however, nicely brisk, and leader Alex Butterworth and Rodrick Long tackled the Bach Double Violin Concerto with considerable technical agility. *Peter and the Wolf* was particularly successful because it allowed the character of the various sections of the orchestra to come through.

The orchestra was led by the excellent conductor, Mr. John Davidson.

The way to do it

Unicorn Theatre: Writing workshops/
Pardon Mr Punch?

It's six years since the Unicorn Theatre started presenting integrated work for deaf and hearing children. Now writer Penny Casdagli, virtually a lone pioneer in the field, is sufficiently confident about the direction in which she has steered the work to start sharing techniques and ideas with other writers at a seminar for writers and directors last weekend. The idea was to make a practical exploration using the writers' own texts.

For Penny Casdagli the story started around the time when, as an actress, she was hanging about on a wet Dr Who location with an actor who told her from personal experience what it was like to be going deaf. Later a British Council Shakespeare tour of the Far East taught her a valuable lesson in the power of gesture above language. Another inspirational episode: witnessing deaf children who were uniformly able to distinguish the words "cup" and "cap" via lip reading with the speakers lips concealed.

Clearly, one guiding principle behind six successful plays is that deafness is a difference more than a disability. Another is that the emotive power of the various forms of sign language, placed alongside mime and the spoken word can intensify theatrical experience for all children, deaf and hearing.

Pardon Mr Punch?, which has been successfully touring festivals, schools and parks across the country for three months, takes the *commedia dell'arte* form as its main convention. Played by four actors, it's an extraordinarily dense play dealing with power and how to get it. Punch's power is amorality and amusing, the doctor's powerlessness results from his unwillingness to admit he is deaf. If he could communicate better Punch wouldn't be able to steal his money and pay off their common landlord. Judy is already deaf and reappears. Old Hamlet like, as an admonitory ghost. Punch's daughter, through a Punch play within a Punch play, exposes that Punch killed her mother and announces she is off to tell

the world the true story.

A feminist *Punch-Hamlet* sounds like heavy going for the under 11s but in fact it is a marvellously jolly play, colourfully presented complete with a person-sized crocodile, a funny dog and a brilliantly conceived clock whose hands "speak" in sign language. The effect is that of a lavishly illustrated cartoon.

It's only when director Sue Parish takes a frame from the cartoon and slows it down to a snail's pace that you see how complicated it is. Who signs, who mimes, who speaks, where, when and how - all are extremely important.

The Casdagli texts are scored like an orchestral work - two sorts of sign language, stage direction and speech have to be dealt with simultaneously. Later, when Ms Parish teaches how such a frame is arrived at, it becomes clear that the whole process is meticulous and demanding. Apart from anything else the hearing actors (two in *Pardon?*) have to learn to sign.

You need to favour the deaf children first explains Ms Casdagli. "Deaf children should succeed in those moments." Thus, at the start of *Pardon?* the opening (when the audience is integrated) lets the deaf into the secret first. Minutes later, the fun can be shared as the audience unifies. However, the power of speech isn't devalued as you might expect. In fact, Punch's daughter Polly hides her ability to speak from Punch until a crucial moment.

At the centre, though, is gesture and sign. Sue Parish invokes Brechtian theory as a guide. "Signing can look added on like semaphore or subtitles she said. In all Penny Casdagli's work it is central."

Ms Casdagli has two advantages. First, she has chosen conventions - like *commedia* - where gestures' significance is entirely appropriate. Second, audiences of children are less prejudiced about form as long as the content is up to scratch. However, Ms Casdagli confirms that she is working on the themes of *Pardon?* for an integrated adult audience. This integrated adult hopes she keeps in the crocodile and the clock.

Nick Baker

Pish-tosh

The Wandering Jew. By Micheline Wandor/Mike Alfreds.
National (Lyttelton) Theatre.
The Colored Museum. By George C Wolfe.
LIFT/Royal Court Theatre.

Eugene Sue's 1845 epic novel *The Wandering Jew* is junk. It sensationalises a mixture of sex and religion, low and high life, Protestant anti-Jesuit anti-Catholicism, the romantic clash of East and West, intrigue and quest now seems risible.

Briefly, Joseph refused to help Christ en route to Calvary; Herodias caused John Baptist's death. They are Jew/leaves condemned to wander until their ains are expiated by Joseph's descendants. Six of these, posterity of French Protestants hounded by Jews in 1682, are enjoined to meet 150 years later to the day on February 13, 1832 to hear the reading of a will which makes them joint-heirs of a 212 million franc fortune dedicated to spreading the Evangel.

"Love one another." Still scheming, aided by cholera, the "Company of Jesus" foment ruin, autoicide, murder to gain control of the inheritance. Thus the forces of democratic anti-clericalism will be smashed, and a Jesuit assume the papacy.

Sue uses ornate descriptions of person and place, pseudo-historical language (these-thou-things), sudden reversals of fortune, and starkly contrasted good and evil to make his effects. In *Wandering Jew* the scissoring and pastiche, undigested chunks of narrative are declaimed by attitudinizing actors stretched in line across the stage. "Pondicherry, mid-October, 1831," one cries. "The land of the blind is not without sight," another intones. Eyes start, hands clasp, the air of orchestral strings, tubular bells and clashing cymbals down long corridors. The steady mounting laughter

from the audience at such pish-toshery.

"Can they be serious?" was the interval's question. The negative answer made its force felt during Act 2 when the audience booed and fell about. Phola Dionisotti's pace ran amok. Mark Ryland's angry Gabriel and tortured Alma, Sylvester Le Touzel's gentle, and vibrant Cophyse, and (above all) Maggie Butt, moving Mayeux gave pause.

But, by moving the spirit of blasphemy, the play seemed to be the real thing. The audience treated *The Wandering Jew* for the pantomime it had become. Tiresomely detailed, frequently over-dramatic, interminably long (five hours), Mike Alfreds' production, with its borrowings from Lyttelton's *Crime and Punishment*, won't make anyone rush to read Sue's *Nicholas Nickleby* which was worth dramatizing.

Some of the numbers in *The Colored Museum* also put us to welcome. George C Wolfe's clever idea - to challenge US negroes' image of themselves now by presenting past and present role-models as museum exhibits under glass (sometimes with scrutiny - must have shaken spectators in New York during the nineties. Thus the forces of democratic anti-clericalism will be smashed, and a Jesuit assume the papacy.

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Creative
force

Wildlife of the Galapagos Islands: A Guide to Evolution
By Andrew Balmford
Set of 30 x 35 mm colour slides in a file with background notes
Price £12.75 from Focal Point Audio Visual Ltd, 251 Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5EE.

The Galapagos Islands are always associated with Charles Darwin and his theory of natural selection. He wrote of them: "one is astonished at the amount of creative force, if such an expression may be used, displayed on these small, barren and rocky islands". This series illustrates some of the evidence which was used by Darwin and later researchers to provide evidence for his theory.

Starting with a map and a slide illustrating a very simplistic diagram of evolution, the set continues by examining the adaptations of the marine iguana, only found on the Galapagos. One of the features that struck Darwin - after it was pointed out to him by the vice-governor - was the way that "the same type of animal differed from island to island". This is illustrated in the set by comparing mocking birds, big lizards, tortoises and even the *Onychomys* from different islands.

The famous "Darwin's finches" are well illustrated by a number of slides and could form the basis of a lesson on their own; pictures of four of the main types of finch are included. A final example of adaptation is given by examining the effect of the persecution of the Galapagos hawk which led to its ecological niche being taken over by the short-eared owl. Sexual selection is also illustrated. Examples used are all birds, two species of booby and the giant frigatebird. The final three slides illustrate the three major concepts developed: adaptation, variation and sexual selection.

This is a remarkably good collection of slides, illustrating the evolutionary biology of such a biologically famous area. I do, however, wish that the author had at least mentioned the correct conservation problems in the islands and the work being attempted to preserve the area. Further, it would have been more helpful to include some contemporary references such as Christopher Raillings' edited version of the *Voyage of the Beagle*.

John A Barker

Farm Animal Slide Pack
£8.63 (inc p&p and VAT)
Scholastic Publications, Marlborough House, Holly Walk, Leamington Spa CV32 4LS.
Cereals Experimental Pack
£4.95

The School Garden Company, PO Box 49, Spalding, Lincs PE11 1NZ.
The Arab Activity Book
£1.25
British Museum Publications, 46 Bloomsbury St, London WC1B 3QQ.
Young Explorers Games
Detailed below
Available from B J Arnold, Hestair Hope and retail stores.

Colour slides are always a useful resource for primary schools and *Farm Animals* will be handy for infants in particular. Twenty-four slides depict various farm animals and everyday farming activities such as milking and tending sheep. They are packed into a neat, practical wallet with equally practical teaching notes which include related fiction and non-fiction book titles and useful addresses.

For £4.95, if you want to get a taste of the farming life, you can. The School Garden Company have produced a *Cereals Experimental Pack* consisting of teachers' notes, pupil instructions and worksheets for photocopying and the seeds: wheat, oats, barley, rye, and so on. Similar packs are available for wild grasses and vegetables. You can even have cereals indoors - you don't have to take over the school playing field.

British Museum Publications have recently produced *The Arab Activity Book* for £1.25. It contains a series of 24 activities which can be used in the classroom or at home. The book is illustrated with a series of 24 black and white photographs of Arab life. The book is written by a team of experts and is suitable for children of all ages. It is a very good value for money.

John A Barker

RESOURCES

Ragged scholarship

Victoria Neumark goes back to the 19th-century East End

No destitute child ever refused admission". What a world that slogan conjures up: the fetid alleys, the freezing slums, "rookeries" of boys on roof tops, and the rescuing hands of Dr Barnardo and his ever-growing organization of orphanages, work brigades, ragged schools, institutes, emigration schemes, Sunday schools and free dinners. You will be able to visit that world, if all goes well, in the new Ragged Schools Museum, which an eager band of volunteers are creating in the premises of Barnardo's largest ragged school in Mile End.

First built as a warehouse, 46-48 Copperfield Street, London E3, opened as a ragged school in 1876. Initially catering to 100 boys and 100 girls, with 76 mixed infants, it expanded at its peak to accommodate over 1,000 while the Sunday School had the same premises taught 2,500 (with 13 teachers). Next door, 50 Copperfield Street was opened as a Working Lads' Institute, giving evening classes.

The schools attracted many pupils because of their free tuition (board schools were 1d a week until 1890) and their free food; 65,000 free meals were supplied by Barnardo's in 1896. But by 1908 Council schools had improved and meals were provided. The Ragged School was closed down. The Sunday School continued until the war of 1914-18, but after that date the building was used as a textile workshop until 1983.

The buildings would have been demolished in 1983 but for the intervention of the Ragged Schools Museum trust, newly created by Tom Ridge, a local teacher, and a few other interested people. What better setting, they reasoned, for a museum about the East End than a building already rich with historical association? And where better to create a museum about education than in an old ragged school?

Listing of the premises in 1985 was followed by their purchase in 1986 (with a GLC grant) and in 1987 the London Grants Scheme funded a curator, Jill Slaney. Yet despite two published feasibility schemes, a promised £210,000 from the London borough of Tower Hamlets has not been forthcoming, though £44,000 from English Heritage will enable structural repairs and alterations to proceed. But just what would Tower Hamlets be getting for its money?

Visiting 46-48 Copperfield Road on one of its open days, the visitor is struck by the buildings. Facing a park, the Ragged School still retains its bell, but its facade, with warehouse wall cranes in place, is dark and gloomy. Inside, passing a shop selling fascinating books and postcards, the visitor climbs the granite stairs to the classroom. There, modern desks are arrayed before old slate blackboards and a teacher's desk. Pupils are exhorted to learn their letters, consider bits of potatoes at 3/4d a lb, and to write the Life of a Penny.

A photo-display conjures up more of the life of the times, with letters from modern school children who have visited to sample a day in a Ragged School. Jill Slaney speaks warmly of the school parties, mostly local, who have visited. "They love it, wearing collars and sitting in rows. And they learn such a lot, because they enjoy it." Ms Slaney is already taking bookings for the autumn term. Anyone wishing

to experience what it was like to have to learn 50 spellings per week or wear the dunce's hat, to learn poetry by rote and experience discipline "kind but firm" (as the Inspector wrote in 1896), should contact Jill Slaney (01-232 2941).

Without more than the £400 awarded last year from Tower Hamlets, the trust is unable to display more of its stock. Tantalizingly in store is Dr Barnardo's study, rescued from the break-up of the Barnardo's Museum. True to its promise to be "the only Museum in the East End about the East End", the Trustees have been using donations to acquire an astonishing variety of other material. The complete inside of a Limehouse house, inhabited by a Thames lighterman, his wife and seven children, a hydraulic jigger from the docks, the interior of a pawnshop and a amnke hole from a fishmonger are waiting offstage. However, the casual visitor can see a completely reconstructed "sweatshop"

with sewing machines, remnants, paper patterns and rag press, all kept from the last inhabitants of the building. There is also a model of an Edwardian outworker at her treadle-machine next to the black-leaded grate and oven. In the centre of the room a beautiful magic lantern stands ready to delight the children.

The trustees' future plans are ambitious but not unreasonable. Citing "a terrific amount of local interest", Tom Ridge is hoping to set up reminiscence workshops. Determined to keep the museum free, as the Ragged School was, he is keen to develop the morphing possibilities. An expanded shop, with publications spinning off from the workshop, would be matched by a cafe. A waterbus linking the museum to a proposed Regents Canal Interpretation scheme, sited on the Docklands Light Railway, would bring in revenue, as would a towpath cafe by the Canal.

The London borough of Tower Hamlets has no local museum, so much suitable material is simply piled in cupboards gathering dust. With a possibility of changing visitors from outside the area, the first phase - featuring Jack the Ripper and the match girls' strike - could be open by summer 1988.

Also underway are plans to use the old Working Lads' Institute at 50 Copperfield Road as a respite centre for parents of handicapped children in the borough. Funding from Barnardo's and the borough is secure for the salaries of the carers; it is only the completion of the building which needs to be established.

With growing public interest in social history, "theme parks" and local museums are riding high as promising investments, particularly in run-down urban areas. The Ragged Schools Museum would offer a unique opportunity for a fully interactive display of local and educational history. Be a Ragged Scholar for the day! Walk into a Victorian school. See the life of the waterfront and visit a lighterman at home! Explore further back in time to the recent past of Jewish refugees. Make use of photographic and study facilities to recreate your own version of the East End.

All donations gratefully received at 46-48 Copperfield Rd, London E3



For sticky fingers

Wendy Body on a range of materials for primary classes

covering such areas as occupations, food and hospitality, markets, oil, Islam and writing, children's games, plus additional reference lists. An interesting introduction to exploring the culture of the Arab world.

Now to a whole range of games for early learning which are produced by Young Explorers Ltd. Devised by Janet Robinson, a headteacher, there are 15 games currently available with a further five in production. The first batch were awarded selection by the London Design Centre - hardly surprising since quality of production oozes out of each of the boxes. All the games are extremely attractive and visually appealing; they are also laminated - good news for teachers and parents of sticky-fingered infants. Even better news is that they are cheap, ranging in price from £2.99 to £5.99. Each box has good clear instructions for playing the games plus additional, sensible notes; a Gujarati version is also included.

Old Mother Hubbard Giant Dominoes (price £2.99) are for counting and matching skills - bones to coloured spots, no numerals. They are a good size for small hands and made from nice sturdy card.

Alphabet Dominoes (price £2.99) with a sensible choice of words, clearly illustrated, are for matching letter to named illustration. The pictures are split, which makes the playing easy.

Alphabet Jigsaw (price £4.99) contains a frieze of black and white outline drawings with accompanying words to colour in and mount on the wall. The words and pictures are the same as those in the puzzle itself and pupils will be glad to note "x" for fox and the more commonly accepted "short" sounds for the vowels.

Alphabet Game (price £4.99) has 26 large picture cards using the same simple, attractive pictures from the game above and smaller cards containing a letter and part of the illustration to match to the picture cards. The cards can also be used to teach alphabetical order.

Noah's Ark World Wildlife Game (price £5.99) contains a beautiful base board with pop up ark and the playing cards of endangered species are most attractively illustrated. Information about these species is given in some detail on the reverse of a large colouring-in sheet. The game is on the race principle, ie getting into the ark with diversions such as raven cards (miss a turn) and rainbow cards (stay where you are). A lovely game, better suited to older children, if they are to learn about endangered species as such.

Dandelion Clock Game (price £4.99) is a good attractive game for 10-12 year olds.

hours when starting to learn to tell the time.

Clocks and Time Dominoes (price £5.99) contains two very pretty clock faces with moveable hands. Additional markings aid the young learner. One clock face is designed to facilitate use of the 24-hour clock.

Mothers Goose Game (price £4.99) is a novel game involving a hunt for golden eggs to place in your basket. A fun game which provides memory training with shape and colour recognition too.

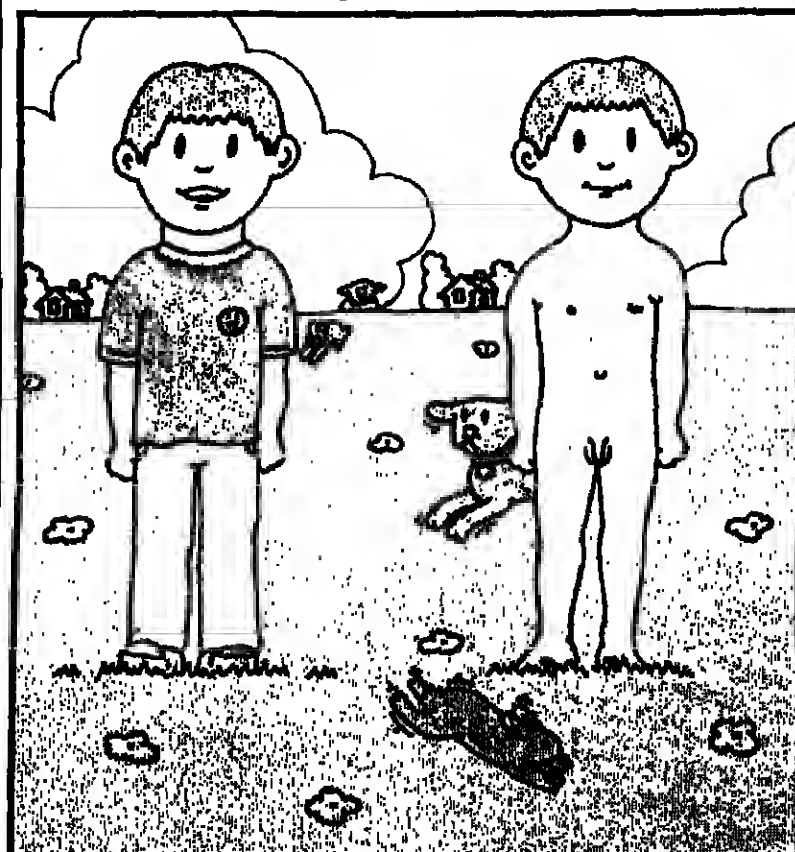
Feed the Birds (price £4.99) is another lovely game for colour recognition involving a race to feed some hungry nestlings. The box also contains an information sheet from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Tadpole Game (price £4.99) provides another race, this time moving along a numbered track with the object of being the first frog to hop out of a pond. Along the way, the various stages of tadpole development are depicted. Also included is an RSPCA information sheet on pond life.

John A Barker

'A children's schedule which perfectly mirrors what Channel 4 is all about'
Hugh David reports on programming for younger viewers

Children's half-hour



Clockwise from left: 'Body Book', 'Pob's Playtime' and 'Hand in Hand'

Major changes at its Charlotte Street headquarters mean that children's programmes will have a regular slot, for the first time, on Channel 4 from next month.

Until now, they have been the responsibility of Naomi Sargent, commissioning editor for educational programmes, and shows like *Pob's Playtime*, *Chip's Comic* and *Adventure* have had to take their chance as part of a "strand" which also boasts series as disparate as *The Wine Programme* and that argumentative television history of Wales, *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*. Now, with the departure of Naomi Sargent's deputy Sue Crockett, children's programming has been moved off in the general direction of Features where it will be looked after by newcomer Rosemary Shepherd who takes up her new post next week. She describes their new plans as "a children's schedule, which perfectly mirrors what Channel 4 is all about."

The new "children's half-hour" which will be going out on weekday lunchtimes from September 21 aims to

fulfil Jeremy Isaacs's dictum that Channel 4 should be "for all of the people some of the time". Currently aimed at the pre-school age group - although there are plans to expand upwards in the future - it is varied in both form and content. Something at least of the package should appeal to just about every under-five, and go some way at least towards increasing Channel 4's share of the child audience. No figures are available for the pre-school age group, but a bare 6 per cent of four to 15-year-olds were watching the channel last year - a lower percentage than in any other age group.

Each of the new lunchtime slots has its own special flavour. Mondays see *Pob*, the magic puppet whose Sunday lunchtime shows have been one of Channel 4's biggest successes with children. In his own show, *Pob's Playtime*, and then there's a new series of five-minute films based on Claire Rayner's *Body Book*. Using live action, animated sequences and songs, *Body Book* aims to give the youngest children an insight into the workings of

their own bodies.

There is more animation on Tuesdays with the arrival on Channel 4 of *Dangermouse* and the start of a series of classic stories. "Assuming that the fans of transatlantic animation are well catered for elsewhere on children's television," says Sue Crockett, "I've tried to find animated versions of stories children may possibly never read but which have endured for centuries. We've got *Culliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe* and a wonderful Czechoslovakian *Sindbad*".

Tuesdays also see groups of children from Central Television's Children's Drama Workshop in Nottingham making their debut as presenters.

Wednesdays will be specially aimed at deaf and hearing-impaired children, with a repeat showing of *Hand in Hand*. "It is minority programming that remains accessible to the majority," explains Rosemary Shepherd. "Pob returns on Thursday to 'wrap' a series of old favourite programmes including *Regisday Anno*, *Moschops* and *Rebecca*, while Fridays bring an

interesting experiment in home-school liaison. *Start Here*, a series introducing basic science, is being repeated principally for schools to record and use.

It makes a fitting end to the week for as is only right, Channel 4's children's programming has a different feel to it from that offered by the major channels. The criticism will surely be raised that it is worthy and generally rather serious-minded, designed to appeal to viewers in the ABC1 socioeconomic group traditionally regarded as Channel 4's natural constituency. But Sue Crockett is unabashed. "Sure, mostly it is good, right-on stuff," she says, "the best philosophy of Channel 4 adapted for children. But that's nothing to be ashamed of."

Rosemary Shepherd, whose responsibility it will all be from next week is equally unrepentant. "As I see it, we have a commitment to do children's programming properly. Quite frankly I'm not interested in filling up hours with cheap buy-ins. We've got to put what little money we have where the need is."

The valley of shadow

Bob Catterall previews a compelling series on African liberation

No Easy Walk
Channel 4, Saturdays 7.30 pm.

No Easy Walk, the new documentary series on free African liberation struggles, raises once again questions about whether colonialism was evil and whether violence was necessary if independence was to be achieved. It shows that these questions cannot be dismissed as once fashionable matters that are no longer relevant.

The series takes its theme from a 1933 statement of Nelson Mandela, who was himself quoting from Jawaharlal Nehru: "There is no easy walk over to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of shadow again, and again before we reach the mountain tops of our desire."

The investigation of the theme begins in a country of immense symbolic resonance, Ethiopia, watched by the second river of Eden, spiritual home of the Rastafarians, and currently a focus for famine relief and political criticism. This programme (August 29) seeks to explore the larger patterns to which these symbolic reference points need to be related. In doing so, the narrative line is from the defeat of the



Italian army in 1896 to the setting up in 1963 of the Organization for African Unity. An important emphasis is given to the liberation struggles against Mussolini's occupation of Ethiopia that formed a prelude to World War II. As in the subsequent programmes, there is no attempt to present a picture of a totally united national experience. For example, their alarm about Haile

Selassie "abandoning" them to live in Britain. Yet this is the one, at the expense of giving due recognition to the significance of the resistance. To some the use of the photograph of a small child, wearing a gun-belt standing side by side with his armed father might be dismissed as an example of radical chic. But in a context of a child's perspective, it is a powerful symbol of the struggle.

at a time when Ethiopia's independence had once again "passed through the valley of shadow".

The remaining programmes show Kenya and Zimbabwe emerging from that valley of shadow. The evils of colonialism are shown to be in need not just of revisionism but at times of a first visit, particularly in the case of Zimbabwe where the material on the use and effects of napalm by government forces in the late Seventies has until now not received adequate attention. Here, as elsewhere, the programmes use a variety of archive material, newsreels, photographs and reports, as well as interviews with participants and commentators.

No Easy Walk makes compelling viewing. Its presentation and examination of the evidence is an important contribution to contemporary history and political understanding.

Programme notes are available from No Easy Walk PO Box 400, London, Glasgow or Belfast. The title music is the series "No Easy Walk to Freedom" on LRT distributed by PRT. Video on Acade.



A preview of the new series of *How We Used to Live*, ITV Schools' popular history programme, can be seen this week on Sunday August 30, 10.30 am and Thursday September 3, at 11.30 pm on ITV.

The programme, which started looking at the Brady family in late Victorian times, has now caught up with its own beginnings. The new series, which starts on Channel 4, September 15, deals with the years 1954 to 1970. The first episode, 'The



Thirst for knowledge: basic amenities at the Tibetan Day School are primitive (above), but the garden provides extra classroom space for the infants (right)

Mountain refugees

Orde Eliason and Karl French on schools for Tibetan exiles in India

In 1959, following the Chinese invasion of their country, 80,000 Tibetans fled to seek political asylum in India. Naturally this new home was considered a temporary one - it still is 28 years later - so it was vital for these refugees to maintain their own identity in preparation for their return to cultural and political autonomy. The Dalai Lama, forming what was effectively a Tibetan government abroad, determined that their main initiative had to be the "education of our children and the rehabilitation of our people".

With this plan in mind, His Holiness appealed to Prime Minister Nehru in 1960 for his support in the establishment of an education programme for the exiled Tibetan children. The Indian leader's response was enthusiastic, and in 1961 he personally supervised the creation of the Tibetan Schools Society.

The new education system began humbly enough with the first school opening on March 3, 1960 at Mussoorie, catering for just 50 pupils. The agreement between the Dalai Lama and Prime Minister Nehru, however, ensured not only educational independence but also continuous government support. By 1986 more than 40,000



Outdoor lesson at a government primary school in New Delhi

students had benefited from the new system.

There have always been critics of the style of teaching adopted within the schools: that the students are exposed too much to the cultural influences of their adopted, or perhaps foster, country. In fact the curriculum seems to be a rather delicate blend of tradition and innovation. The Tibetan leader himself saw the need for his people to keep abreast of all educational progress, so all the schools offer compulsory science alongside English, Hindi and Tibetan language, culture, history and religion.

Annually there are 15 scholarships from the schools - mainly to scientific colleges - and in all between 15 per cent and 20 per cent of school-leavers enter higher education at Institutes of the Arts, Medicine or Engineering. The remainder return to share their knowledge and experience with their communities.

The Tibetan schools aim to keep the young people in tune with their heritage for the time when they resume sovereignty of their own country. Their usefulness may prove to be as a means of gradual integration for the people as a whole into an alien country and a modern world.

Despite government support, the future of the Tibetan schools in India remains uncertain. Ugyen Tsering, the Principal of the Tibetan Day School in New Delhi, recently expressed his concern. As a first-wave refugee orphan of the Chinese invasion and a product of the system himself, he has seen the schools develop. But now he faces an imminent crisis.

His school contains around 100 pupils housed in five ill-equipped classrooms. Apart from official Indian funding, the school relies upon financial aid from other countries, specifically

Norway and Belgium. But now the money from Norway seems to be disappearing.

Recent tourists to the school's temple were so moved by the children that they contributed enough money to fund a new science block. But if further donations are not forthcoming this classroom is destined to remain unequipped.



Childparental involvement

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Further information and application forms may be obtained from the Secretary General, The Associated Examining Board, 650 Hill House, Dulford, Surrey GU5 5XJ, to whom completed forms should be returned no later than 31st September 1987. Interviews will be held in London on 6th October 1987. (30194) 600000

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Job Description and Application Form available from: Mr. L. R. Evans, Director of Nurse Education, West Thames School of Nursing, Twickenham University Hospital, Twickenham Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW7 6AF.

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